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Exploring Theatre Translation:
The Translator of the Stage in the Case
of a Stanislavskian Actor

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Translation Studies

University of Warwick

Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies

2013

Acknowledgements

The doctoral thesis at hand was completed with the financial support of the Hellenic State Scholarships' Foundation (IKY).

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Professor Lynne Long, who was my teacher, my tutor, my supervisor and, dare I say, my friend for the five long years of my study at the University of Warwick. Without her invaluable guidance, encouragement, patience, and inspiration what today I am proudly presenting as a completed doctoral thesis would have never found its way onto the page.

I am extremely grateful to Professor Anthony Howard for his support and understanding during the revision stage of this thesis. His compassion and encouragement gave me strength to see the writing up and completion of my thesis through during a particularly difficult time.

I would also like to thank Professor Giorgos Andriomenos, who believed in me and graciously agreed to provide me on a hot day in the middle of August 2003 with the much-needed letter of recommendation that enabled me to come to Warwick for my postgraduate studies. Had it not been for his confidence in my academic abilities, I would not have had the opportunity to pursue a degree in the United Kingdom.

I am truly grateful to my family for its love, support, and understanding. Particularly so to my grandfather, Ioannis Katalifos, for all that he has done and continues to do for his children and grandchildren.

Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to my two housemates and friends, Dr. Ioannis Kosmidis and (Dr. to be) Konstantinos Bakoulas, for enduring the long periods of my monastic isolation and bewildering mood swings. I'm also thankful to Dr. Evmorfia Argyriou for her insight into the world of psychology; to Iasonas Kepaptsoglou for the precious time he kindly devoted to helping me with my presentations; and to Dr. Dafni Papadoudi for the long hours she compassionately spent on the phone listening to my brainstorm.

I am indebted to you all.

This thesis is dedicated to my mother.

References and bibliography

The MLA reference system has been followed for references and bibliography.

Note

The guidelines established by the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages were used for the Anglicisation of Russian names with the exception of transliterations already used in published works.

Abstract

Amongst the rich variety of metaphors used to describe the process of transferring texts from one language into another, the parallels between translating and the acting process enjoy a prominent place.

This thesis examines the arguments of both translation scholars and practitioners who highlight a need for translators to be able to function as actors do, particularly when translating for the stage, or to have at least an understanding of how actors work.

By comparing and contrasting the creative process involved in translation, particularly drama translation, with that fostered by a particular method of drama training, namely that developed by Konstantin Stanislavsky, it is the purpose of this thesis not only to explore whether and how an awareness of the ways actors work could be of benefit to the translator, but also to examine the implications of thinking of the Translator as Actor.

This thesis will initially offer an overview and contextualisation of the Stanislavskian approach to acting (Chapter I) and of existing approaches to drama translation (Chapter II). It will seek to examine the core aspects of the Stanislavskian approach to preparing for a performance (Chapters III-VI), and will explore areas of similarity and difference between this and the work of translation. In the final chapter (Conclusions), an attempt will be made to evaluate the extent to which the work of drama translators may be informed by the practices of Stanislavskian actors, as well as the validity of thinking of the Translator as Actor.

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Introduction

Over time, translators and their work have been metaphorically represented in an extremely rich variety of ways. In the introduction to her 1699 translation of Homer's *Iliad*, for example, Anne Dacier likened the translator to a "sculptor who tries to recreate the work of a painter" (qtd. in Wechsler 10). Howard Nemerov saw translators as accountants maintaining "a desperate system of double-entry bookkeeping" (qtd. in Belitt 78) whereas according to Franz Schoenberger, a "really perfect translator is an alchemist, almost a magician" (qtd. in Wellwarth 143).

One of the most commonly used ways to metaphorically describe the process of transferring texts from one language into another is acting. Dragoslav Andrić, for example, in addition to describing the translator as a "seismologist who follows subterranean vibrations" (33), maintains that "translating contemporary plays is a creative discipline very close to acting: it is, or should be, a kind of introverted acting pressed into a word" (ibid. 32). Building on Ralph Manheim's suggestion that "translators are like actors who speak the lines as the author would" (qtd. in Grossman 10), Edith Grossman argues that "translation ... is a kind of interpretative performance, bearing that same relationship to the original text as the actor's work does to the script" (ibid. 10). In a rather similar manner, Willard Trask points out that what both actors and translators essentially do is "take something of someone else's and put it over as if it were their own" (13-14). "So in addition to the technical stunt", argues Trask, "there is a psychological workout, which translation involves: something like being on stage" (ibid. 14).

It is not, however, only on a metaphorical level that actors/acting and translators/translating have been brought together. In his work *Die Literarische Übersetzung: Theorie Einer Kunstgattung*, Jirí Levý maintains that actors and translators are bound together by the very nature of their work. "Translation as a work", writes Levý, "is an artistic reproduction; translating as a process is one of original creation; translation as

an art form lies on the borderline between a reproductive and an originally creative art. It is in that respect that, from all arts, translation lies closer to the art of acting ...” (66).¹ For the Italian playwright Luigi Pirandello, on the other hand, it is the relationship they share towards the original work and its creator that binds together not only actors and translators but also illustrators. According to Pirandello, all three “are faced with a work of art that has already been conceived of and effected by someone else” and no matter how much they try, it will always be extremely difficult for them “to succeed in seeing as the author saw, in feeling as the author felt and in transferring the character onto a stage as the author would have wished” (28-29).

Drama translation provides us with another particularly interesting context within which actors and translators have been brought together. There appears to be a wide consensus among both translation scholars and practitioners that being actually able to think as an actor, or having at least an awareness of how actors work, is of vital importance particularly when translating for the stage. Reporting on the results of a survey she conducted among professional drama translators, for example, Phyllis Zatlin points out that

“[t]o the question, ‘In a nutshell, what advice do you have for aspiring theatrical translators who wish to get started in the field?’, the majority of my respondents gave me the same basic answer. First get involved within the theatre. Learn to act, make friends with theatre people or at least visit a local theatre and talk to literary managers, directors, actors or theatre critics” (31-32).

In agreement with the majority of the professionals who participated in Zatlin’s survey, Susan Bassnett also advises translators to familiarise themselves with the art of the actors prior to becoming involved in a drama translation project. “No one should attempt to

¹ Levý’s suggestion reads in the original German: “Die Übersetzung als Werk ist eine künstlerische Reproduktion, das Übersetzen als Vorgang ein originales Schaffen, die Übersetzung als Kunstgattung ein Grenzfall an der Scheide zwischen reproduzierender und original schöpferischer Kunst. Darin kommt der Übersetzung von allen Künsten die Schauspielkunst am nächsten ...” (66) [my translation].

translate a play,” writes Bassnett, “without some practical experience of the theatre and some means of testing the effectiveness of the translation on a level other than the literary” (“Translating Spatial Poetry” 172). George E. Wellwarth brings forward a similar suggestion arguing that “there is no question that some experience as an actor particularly or, failing that, a knowledge of oral communication, is indispensable” for those translating for the stage (140-141).

The various links, which are implied to exist between translators and actors, were the initial inspiration for the present thesis and set the aim of this study, that is to explore the possibilities and limitations of the relationship between translators and actors by focusing on the way(s) in which their respective creative processes are related or may differ. There are two central hypotheses that this thesis will seek to explore: a) that the creative process of actors may be paralleled to the creative process of translators, and b) that the creative process of translators may be informed by the way in which actors work.

In pursuing the above hypotheses, a series of questions can be formulated with the aim of addressing their core aspects critically. Specifically, the first question to address is whether the assumed similarities between actors and translators really exist, and to what extent. As has already been indicated, both actors and translators stand between the original creator and the recipients of his or her work simultaneously as re-creators and creators in their own right; both are faced not only with the fiction of the author's original creation but also with the reality of the reception of their own re-creation; and, if we were to consider the case of drama translation, both are confronted not only with the same text type but also with each other's creation. What this thesis will attempt to discover is how deep these similarities between translators and actors run. In other words, how appropriate is it to see the translator as actor? Is it actually possible for translators to function as actors? Could they replicate when transferring texts from one language into another the creative process

actors follow when performing or preparing for a role? And if not, what would prevent them from doing so?

A further set of questions to be addressed concerns the possibility of the work of actors functioning as what could pre-theoretically be termed an ‘efficient model’ for the work of translators. In other words, whether and in what way(s) an awareness of how actors work could be of benefit to the work of the translator. In drama translators’ eyes, for example, actors appear to have access to something that, although essential to the work of those translating for the stage, cannot be learned outside the theatre. Theatre professionals seem to confirm this notion of a secret knowledge known only to actors. Addressing the members of the Actors Studio, the American director Lee Strasberg, for example, brought forward the following analogy: “[When] a doctor looks at an X-ray [he] sees things in it that you don’t see. Why? Because he is a doctor. When an actor looks at a script he sees things in it as an actor” (qtd. in Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 64). What this thesis will attempt to discover is not only what is it that actors *see* in a playtext and how is that different from what translators *see* but also what could translators learn from the actors and how could they apply this knowledge to their own work.

As both *translator* and *actor* are two very generic terms, however, this thesis will seek to attain its objectives focusing on a particular type of translator, namely a drama translator, and a particular type of actor, namely a Stanislavskian one. By confining itself in this way, this study suffers inevitably from two main limitations.

The first one emanates from the decision to assess the usefulness and applicability of an actor’s creative process to the translator’s work, and thereby also the validity of the latter’s resemblance to an actor, only in the case of drama translators. What led to this decision was the firm conviction with which the drama translators themselves maintain that an appreciation of the actors’ creative process is absolutely essential to their own work.

This is not to suggest, however, that translators who deal with different types of texts and who do not interact with actors could not benefit from an awareness of the way actors work, or that they bear no resemblance to a stage performer. In the concluding section of this thesis we will have the opportunity to project our findings to the general case of translating and to discuss, however briefly, how the particular case of the relationship between the drama translator and the type of actor chosen for this study can be said to hold true for other types of translators as well.

The second limitation of the research at hand comes as a consequence of the decision to use a particular approach to acting and actors' training that comes from a Western performance culture. This means that we will have to exclude from our discussion not only other Western acting approaches and methodologies but also those that have emanated from Eastern performance cultures. This decision was reached for two main reasons. The first reason for choosing Konstantin Stanislavsky's approach to acting was not only its indisputable and pervasive influence on the Western stage from the beginning of the 20th century until our own time but also the fact he was the first to bring forward a sustained training system for actors in Europe and North America (Hodge xviii).² As Jane Milling and Graham Ley point out in their work *Modern Theories of Performance: From Stanislavski to Boal*, "there was, in the history of the European theatre, no real precedent for ... a pedagogic system of acting which crossed cultural boundaries to such great effect" (1). Insofar as Milling and Ley are right to suggest that Stanislavsky's attempt to systematise the actors' training can be thought to have caused the equivalent of an educational Big Bang in the theatrical universe, one could consequently argue that his

² To a large extent Stanislavsky's theory remains influential even in our days both in as well as out of the theatre. In an article published in 1983, for example, Lucy Stone McNeece demonstrated how Stanislavsky's "concept of improvisation" could be used as a tool for teaching foreign languages (830). In a similar manner, Wendy A. Lippe's article "Stanislavski's Affective Memory As A Therapeutic Tool" published in 1992 may serve as an example of how Stanislavsky's acting approach is still being used as a source for further research in psychotherapy, psychodrama, and sociometry.

theory appears to be the right place to look for the foundations of the stage performers' aforementioned *secret knowledge*, at least as far as Western actors are concerned.

The second and perhaps more important reason that led to the selection of Stanislavsky's acting approach as our case study was the type of actor that translators appear to have in mind when talking about the need for the translator to function as actor during the process of transferring texts from one language into another. Trask's distinct reference to the *psychological workout* that acting – as well as translating – involves, for example, seems to point towards an acting model that places emphasis particularly on the performer's emotional/spiritual engagement when dealing with a playwright's work. Considering that the actors' complete psychological commitment and submission to their roles is also known to constitute the cornerstone of Stanislavsky's approach to acting, it was thought that an agreement on the importance of establishing this particular type of contact with the original creation could present one with multiple points to compare and contrast when examining the creative processes followed respectively by actors and drama translators.

The ways in which translators themselves have chosen to describe their experiences when transferring playtexts from one language into another as well as their role in the theatre will also serve as one of the main methodological tools used for the deeper understanding of the mechanics behind their work for the stage. Admittedly, these personal accounts do not always share the scientific foundations of the other sources we will need to draw upon, implicitly or explicitly, in order to reconstitute the drama translators' creative processes, such as the fields of semiotics, of pragmatics, of sociolinguistics, of Think Aloud Protocol studies etc. However, they may shed light on aspects of their work in the theatre that the other, non-anecdotal sources may on occasion fail to notice. Trask's suggestion, for example, that it is not only the translators' intellect but also their *psychology* that takes part

and is tested during the course of a translation task, is something that has rarely been discussed within the framework of drama translation studies. This is not to say, of course, that suggestions such as the one Trask brings forward will be taken at face value and not be subjected to analysis and criticism. Rather than to dismiss them in advance, however, on the grounds of being unscientific and thus unreliable, we will carefully use these instances of self-reflection as a means to acquire access to a wider range of voices and perspectives on drama translation.

As far as the structure of our exploration of the central hypotheses is concerned, this study will first provide an overview and contextualisation of the Stanislavskian approach to acting, together with a further substantiation of this particular choice for the aims of the present study (Chapter I). Subsequently, an overview of existing approaches to drama translation will be attempted with the aim to provide a further contextualisation of the Stanislavskian approach in terms of its practical value (and validity) for translational work, as well as some further grounds for the comparison intended (Chapter II). In Chapters III–VI, a critical evaluation of core aspects of the Stanislavskian approach will be attempted with the aim to let possible similarities and differences to the translational work surface. These chapters are structured according to the stages, which reflect the progression considered by Stanislavsky to be essential in order for an actor to approach his or her role in view of a performance. Finally, the concluding chapter will attempt to summarise the contrastive comparison with the aim to assess the questions posed at the beginning of the thesis and to provide a critical evaluation of the extent to which translational work may be informed by the work of Stanislavskian actors.

Chapter I

Introducing and Contextualising Stanislavsky

The aim of the chapter to follow is to offer an introduction to Stanislavsky, and to contextualise his work in terms both of his contemporary context, and ours.

In the first section entitled *Stanislavsky in Time: Now and Then* we will look at how Stanislavsky came to evolve his acting System at the time that he did, what position his work occupied in the history of the Russian theatre, what were the reasons that led to its profound success in the US, and finally what is its relevance to acting today and what implications this has for the research at hand.

The second section entitled *Stanislavsky in Print: Creation, Manipulation and Translation* explores the writings of the famous Russian director on which this thesis was based. In this section we will discuss the history behind Stanislavsky's written work and look in particular at the way his language and ideas were translated into English.

In the third and final section entitled *Approaching Stanislavsky: Issues of Methodology* we will offer a description of the three pillars of Stanislavsky's approach to acting and the methodology followed for their examination from the perspective of drama translation.

I.1. Stanislavsky in Time: Now and Then

In order to understand the conditions that led to the creation of his System, one first needs to look at the theatre Stanislavsky grew up in and eventually revolted against.

According to Jean Benedetti, the Russian theatre “in the last quarter of the nineteenth century was in a poor state” (*Stanislavski: An Introduction* 3). Up until the abolition of the monopoly of the five state-run Imperial Theatres by Tsar Alexander III in 1882, there were no commercial theatres in Russia. Although there were some attempts at opening private theatres prior to the end of the monopoly³ as well as a limited number of private theatres that operated “on a small scale in provincial towns, on the country estates of the wealthy, and in the temporary summer theatres in the capital cities”, drama was mostly performed at Moscow’s Maly Theatre and St. Petersburg’s Aleksandrinsky Theatre, which were under Imperial control – “a legacy of the introduction of theatre in Russia through the royal court” (Marsh, “Realism in the Russian theatre” 147-148).⁴ The actors’ training took place in each of the Imperial Theatres, which had their own “schools with ballet and drama classes” (Ostrovsky 218). The acting school at the Maly Theatre, for example, offered courses in the “history of Russian and foreign literature, dramatic and theatrical history, church history, civil history, one foreign language, diction, fencing, singing, painting, ‘drama practicum’ and preparation of examination scenes” (Senelick, *National Theatre* 375).⁵ Despite such an elaborated curriculum, however, dramatic art both

³ In his article “Imperial and Private Theatres, 1882-1905” Arkady Ostrovsky refers to two such attempts in particular: the creation of the Artistic Circle, which was founded 1865 by “a group of actors and playwrights supported by [dramatist] Ostrovsky” and the foundation of the Dramatic Theatre in Malkiel House in 1880 by actress Anna Brenko (218-219).

⁴ More information on the history of the Imperial Theatres in Russia can be found in a variety of works such as Laurence Senelick’s *National Theatre in Northern and Eastern Europe, 1746-1900* (376-395), Arkady Ostrovsky and Robert Leach’s *A History of Russian Theatre* (218-253) and Christine Edwards’s *The Stanislavsky Heritage* (5-24).

⁵ According to Senelick, the acting school at the Maly was closed in 1871 due to “administrative lack of interest” and was re-opened in 1888 (*National Theatre* 375). The school’s new curriculum, which is described in the main text, was modeled on the Comédie Française.

at the Imperial Theatres as well as in the Moscow Conservatory and Philharmonic, which also offered dramatic classes, “played second fiddle to musical and vocal instruction” (ibid. 375). As Cynthia Marsh points out, “most learning was conducted on the job, with young actors gaining expertise from established stars” and great actors developing “style dynasties of their own” (“Realism in the Russian Theatre” 159).⁶ With the role of the director not having yet been established, the weight of all organisational responsibilities fell on the stage managers. They were not only responsible for casting the play and deciding on the “setting, furniture, costumes, wigs, properties, scenery, [and] effects” that were to be used in each production⁷ (Senelick, *National Theatre* 383), but also faced a series of logistic problems created by their obligation to share props and furniture with the Imperial Theatres for opera and ballet, which were performed at the Bolshoi in Moscow and the Maryinsky in St. Petersburg.⁸ The fact that the actors’ main artistic work on their characters took place “outside the rehearsal room” meant that the rehearsal process itself was of a purely technical nature (Ostrovsky 224). As former manager at the Maly V. A. Nelidov recounts:

“Often the stage manager and the performers would not set eyes on the physical production until the dress rehearsals and sometimes not even until the performance, for it was considered enough that they be informed of the ground-plan, i.e. that the door would be here and the desk there. Rehearsals were run quite simply. People came on stage holding scripts, read their roles and were ‘distributed positions’, i.e. it was agreed that x would stand there and y sit there. Ten or twelve was the largest number of rehearsals. After the third rehearsal scripts were discarded. The role had to be learned by heart, so one, two or

⁶ In his autobiography, Stanislavsky devotes a whole chapter describing the dramatic schools of his time noting that “the majority of the so-called professors of dramatic art were charlatans, as they have remained till the present day; and prominent individual actors were in the possession of some fundamentals which they either worked out themselves, or received as a heritage from the great actors of past generations” (*My Life in Art* 79).

⁷ According to Christopher Innes, it was in the course of nineteenth century that “stage scenery developed from the painted blackcloths of Restoration drama to three-dimensional reproductions of interiors and elaborate impressions of natural effects” with the introduction of the first three walled, roofed setting, known as a box set, in 1831 and the substitution of candles and oil lamps with gaslights in 1830, lime lights in 1837 and finally electrical lights in 1881 (9-10).

⁸ Describing in his memoirs the conditions of the Moscow theatrical stages of his time, Vladimir Aleskandrovich Nelidov recounts a rather amusing incident that took place during a production of Shakespeare’s *Much Ado About Nothing* by the Maly Theatre: right before the third act a dresser took the sword of Benedick, played by “the star of the Maly Theatre” Aleksandr Lensky, because “it was needed in an opera in which an Italian celebrity was singing” (qtd. in Senelick, *National Theatre* 384).

three days were set aside for memorization, depending on the size of the part” (qtd. in Senelick, *National Theatre* 383).⁹

It was not, however, only the play’s rehearsals that were patterned. As Laurence Senelick points out, the *mise en scène* of the performance, which was also something that stage managers were responsible for, was simply “a matter of the star taking centre stage, secondary actors taking the hindmost” (ibid. 377).¹⁰ The only thing that led the Moscow intelligentsia to consider the Maly “more than just a theatre, [a] ‘Second Moscow University,’ a place of great cultural importance”, and a model for private theatres, was the acting (Ostrovsky 223).¹¹ As Ostrovsky points out, “the audiences were used to conventional sets and costumes and paid little attention to them – only actors and their roles mattered” (ibid. 224).¹² However, according to Benedetti, the great actors in Stanislavsky’s time belonged mainly to “the older generation and they were surrounded by mediocrity” (*Stanislavski: An Introduction* 4).

Being born in 1863 and to a wealthy family, Stanislavsky had the opportunity not only to witness but also to participate in virtually all forms of late nineteenth century theatrical life of Imperial Russia.¹³ Dissatisfied with the decline of professional theatre

⁹ In an unpublished manuscript Stanislavsky describes the rehearsal processes of his time in an identical manner (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: An Introduction* 4).

¹⁰ It would not be until 1885 and the first visit of the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen’s company that the audiences of Moscow would witness an ensemble approach to performance as well as productions that were “historically true, with well-directed mob scenes, fine outer form and amazing discipline” (Stanislavski, *My Life in Art* 197). According to Robert Gordon, the Saxe-Meiningen’s company “pioneered the role of the ‘autocrat-director’, shifting the artistic control from the star actor to the director” (28).

¹¹ Stanislavsky too thought very highly of the Maly Theatre. As he points out in his autobiography, the Maly “became the lever which controlled the spiritual and intellectual side of our life” (*My Life in Art* 91).

¹² Needless to say, of course, that it was not just Russian theatre that bore the particular characteristics. As Robert Gordon points out, the haphazardness of the rehearsals conducted by stage managers, the actors’ training consisting primarily of apprenticeships in provincial productions, apart from “some instruction in specific skills such as fencing, tumbling, and dancing”, the understanding of acting “as the art of the virtuoso”, and the organization of the entire performance so as to direct the attention of the audience specifically toward “the stars’ displays of histrionic effects” were common currency in all theatrical stages of Continental Europe during the nineteenth century (26-27).

¹³ Stanislavsky was deeply immersed in the Russian theatre establishment from birth. He was taught ballet by Yekaterina Sankovskaya, “one of the most outstanding ballerinas in Russia” (Roose-Evans 10); he had developed his vocal technique studying with Fiodor Komissarzhevski, who was “a leading member of the Bolshoi company and professor at the Conservatoire” (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 19); he had served as director of the “Moscow branch of the Russian Musical Society and the Moscow Conservatoire”

practice, he found in the playwright Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko a natural ally who would help him revitalise the Russian theatre. The necessary reforms were laid out during the first meeting between the two men in 1897 when the founding of the Moscow Art Theatre was decided:

“We protested against the customary manner of acting, against declamation, against overacting, against the bad manner of production, against the habitual scenery, against the star system which spoiled the ensemble, against the light and farcical repertoire which was being cultivated on the Russian stage at the time” (Stanislavski, *My Life in Art* 330).

By protesting against falsehood and pretence in the theatre, Stanislavsky was not introducing a new concept to the Russian acting tradition. He was merely answering the call for a more realistic style of acting advocated in the 1820s and 1830s by writers such as Pushkin and Gogol and necessitated by the lifelike characters created not only by his contemporary playwrights in Russia and abroad, such as Tolstoy, Ibsen and Chekhov, but also by members of the previous generation of Russian playwrights, such as Griboyedov and Ostrovsky.¹⁴ Neither was he the first to offer a realistic performance on the Russian stage. During the 1840s and 1850s actors such as Mochalov and Shchepkin had already set the standards against which Stanislavsky’s performances would be measured.¹⁵ Even the conceptual roots of his plea for “a properly thought-out method of ... harnessing [one’s] own natural creativity” (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: An Introduction* 3) can be traced back to

(Whyman 20-21); he had trained at the Moscow Theatre School, which was founded by the Maly Theatre, even if only to leave within three weeks disappointed that he was taught nothing more than how to “copy his masters’ interpretations, their manners, [and] their tricks” (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 21); he had studied in minute detail all productions at the Maly and those of foreign troupes, such as Saxe-Meiningen company, as well as all performances given by individual touring foreign artists, such as Tommaso Salvini, Ernesto Rosi, Eleonora Duse and others; and finally, and most importantly, he had acted and directed extensively as an amateur during the fourteen years that separated his short stay at the acting school at the Maly and his meeting with Nemirovich-Danchenko.

¹⁴ More information on the influence Russian playwrights had on the Russian stage can be found in Christine Edwards’s work *The Stanislavsky Heritage* (17-21).

¹⁵ More information on the first actors who offered realistic performances on the Russian stage can be found in Christine Edwards’s work *The Stanislavsky Heritage* (14-17) as well as in Anatoly Altshuller’s work (104-123).

the early-nineteenth century writings of Diderot and Talma.¹⁶ What was to separate him from the advocates of realism who preceded him was therefore not the originality of his ideas about more true to life performances but rather his determination to systematise the actors' training by exploiting "practice in order to generate theory" (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 67). As Benedetti points out, however, despite "his intellectual perception of the necessity for realism, for truth, for honesty, [and] for observation", Stanislavsky suffered from the lack of "*any* method in his playing a role" at the beginning of his career at the Moscow Art Theatre (*Stanislavski: A Biography* 20).¹⁷ During the first eight successful years of his theatre's existence, Stanislavsky may have managed to revolutionise the way in which plays were staged but his technique both as an actor and a director was still purely external.¹⁸ As Benedetti observes, "Stanislavski had learned to imitate life rather than other actors but he still did not understand the nature of the creative act or the inner life of the actor" (ibid. 23). This inevitably made Stanislavsky susceptible to theatrical clichés. Reflecting on his "artistic past" (Stanislavski, *My Life in Art* 459) while summering in Finland before the 1906-1907 theatre season, he came to realise that for some reason during one of the performances of his latest success his body had started to repeat mechanically the actions of the character without him experiencing any kind of feeling or sense of creation.¹⁹ His joy in acting had disappeared.²⁰ Creating a method that would help him

¹⁶ More information about the similar ways in which Stanislavsky, Diderot and Talma developed their acting theories can be found in Christine Edwards work *The Stanislavsky Heritage* (130-139) as well as in Joseph R. Roach's work *The Player's Passion: Studies in the Science of Acting* (204-205).

¹⁷ The emphasis added is to be found in the original.

¹⁸ In order to understand Stanislavsky's impact on the Russian stage, one has only to compare the 1896 production of Chekhov's *The Seagull* at the Aleksandrinsky Theatre with the Moscow Art Theatre's staging two years later. As Sharon Carnicke points out, "the first relied on nineteenth-century conventions. It served as a benefit for a popular comic actress and featured a star. The cast met for a few rehearsals, learning their parts on their own and supplying their own costumes. The theatre used sets from the existing stock. ... In contrast, the Moscow Art Theatre put eighty hours of work into thirty-three rehearsals in order to cultivate an ensemble of actors without stars. Sets, costumes, properties and sound (including humming crickets and barking dogs) were all carefully designed to support a unified vision of the play. The directors held three dress rehearsals" ("Stanislavsky's System" 2-3). Stanislavsky, nonetheless, believed that the play was "under-rehearsed and insisted that the opening be postponed for a week" (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 83).

¹⁹ The role in question was that of Dr. Stockman in Ibsen's play *An Enemy of the People*.

avoid falling into that “state of fossilization” in the future was an absolute, practical necessity (ibid, 459): as Jean Benedetti puts it, Stanislavsky “had to create a survival-kit for himself as an actor” (*Stanislavski: A Biography* 163).

In his attempt to identify the nature of the problem, Stanislavsky came to the conclusion that although his exhaustion from the numerous performances and lengthy rehearsals, and his sadness about Chekhov’s death two years earlier could not have caused such a “spiritual petrification”, they most certainly had influenced his disposition to be inspired:

“Creativeness on the stage demands first of all a special condition, which, for want of a better word, I will call the creative mood. ... I understood that ... all men of the stage, from the genius to the mediocrity, are able to receive the creative mood, but it is not given them to control it with their own will. They receive it ... in the form of a heavenly gift. ... Not pretending at all to be god and to hand out heavenly gifts, I nevertheless put the following question to myself: “Are there no technical means by which the actor can achieve the creative mood, so that inspiration may appear oftener than is its wont?” This does not mean that I was going to create inspiration by artificial means. That would be impossible. What I wanted to learn was how to create a favourable condition for the appearance of inspiration by means of the will, that condition in the presence of which inspiration was most likely to descent into the actor’s soul ... [and] make this condition no longer a matter of mere accident” (*My Life in Art* 461-462).

If inspiration was truly “Apollo breathing life into the artist”, as Stanislavsky believed it to be, “recalling the word’s etymology, with its Latin connection to breath”, then the artists of the stage needed to find a way to enable this “force from without” to function (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 136-137). By observing the performances and rehearsals of other actors and analyzing his own experiences, Stanislavsky concluded that it is possible for an actor to nurture the *creative mood* by achieving and maintaining the following conditions while on stage: complete relaxation of the body, absolute

²⁰ As Stanislavsky puts it in his autobiography, he “had forgotten ... the feeling of truth which is the fundamental element, the awakener, the mover and the lever of the spiritual life” of the characters he had portrayed (*My Life in Art* 459).

concentration of the mind and continuous stimulation of the imagination. For over 30 years Stanislavsky experimented, “at the price of tremendous work, of years wasted in mistakes”, on these three pillars of creation, testing a plethora of diverse ideas and approaches (Stanislavski, “The Hard Job” 10).²¹ As he leaped from one production to the next, more often than not working simultaneously on several projects, he would use Dalcroze’s Eurhythmics in order to teach his actors “a great deal about rhythm in music and in dancing” (Boleslavsky 125), “Hindoo philosophy and ... the yoga system of abstract meditation and mental concentration” in order to help them keep their bodies relaxed and their attention focused on the stage (Magarshack, *Stanislavsky: A Life* 322), and “psychological theories of emotion from France and Russia” for the stimulation of their imagination (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 27), in other words their ability to “visualise the details of the character’s life specifically and concretely” (ibid. 175). Stanislavsky was, however, not only the actor/director expected and required to produce plays successfully but also the teacher responsible for the education of young actors and directors. The conflict of interests between these two roles Stanislavsky had to play can be best illustrated by the following incident described by Jean Benedetti:

“Stanislavski was working with a young actor, Sushkevich, on his one line in Tolstoi’s *The Living Corpse*. It was a simple announcement but Stanislavski made his pupil speak it a dozen different ways, in a dozen different characterizations, from the adolescent to the senile, on the grounds that a creative actor should be able to offer the director a choice” (*Stanislavski: A Biography* 211).²²

²¹ As Stanislavsky admits in his autobiography, he had turned “the rehearsals into an experimental laboratory” and his co-workers to “guinea pigs to be used in experimentation” (*My Life in Art* 462-463). Needless to say, of course, that even those who had worked with him for years were at times unable to cope with the chaotic variability of Stanislavsky’s suggestions. The legendary breakdown of his most experienced actress, Olga Knipper, during the dress rehearsals for Ivan Turgenev’s play *A Month in the Country* may serve as an indication of the confusion his extraordinarily rich tapestry of ideas, accompanied unavoidably by an equally challenging vocabulary, brought upon his closest collaborators. Stanislavsky apologised to her the very next day promising “not to frighten” her anymore (Benedetti, *The Moscow Art Theatre Letters* 277). More information about Stanislavsky’s relationship with the actresses of the Moscow Art Theatre can be found in Maria Ignatieva’s work *Stanislavsky and Female Actors*.

²² In his article “Linguistics and Poetics” Roman Jakobson also describes a similar incident of a former actor of the Moscow Art Theater who was asked at his audition by the famous Russian director “to make forty

As the role of the teacher won Stanislavsky gradually over, his rehearsing methodologies and aims became even more explorative and educative.²³ “Never begin with results,” Stanislavsky cautioned his pupils, “they will appear in time as the logical outcome of what has gone before” (*An Actor Prepares* 185). By shifting his focus onto the process rather than the outcome, he was consciously welcoming any idea that could potentially help him with his “life’s object”, that is “to get as near ... to the so-called ‘System’, i.e. to the nature of creation” (qtd. in Benedetti, *Stanislavski: An Introduction* 74). His experimentation with plays of the avant-garde movement of Symbolism, the free hand he gave to his former pupil Meyerhold to explore further the new trends in the theatre in a studio he opened specifically for him, and the creation of no less than four additional theatre studios, plus one dedicated to opera, where experimentation could continue uninterrupted and unattached to the needs of the Art Theatre, may serve as examples of Stanislavsky’s openness to new ideas.

Stanislavsky was convinced that the problems actors face could not be addressed collectively; they need to be broken down into smaller units and dealt with separately.²⁴ This means that although his suggestions may have originated from different sources, they always aimed at attaining smaller, specific objectives necessitated by either one of the three aforementioned pillars of creation. Particularly as far as the stimulation of the actors’

different messages from the phrase *Segodnja večerom* ‘This evening,’ by diversifying its expressive split” (354).

²³ As far as effectiveness is concerned, it grew to be of secondary importance to Stanislavsky. Addressing the cast of Molière’s *Tartuffe*, his final and incomplete project at the Moscow Art Theatre, Stanislavsky spoke candidly about his future plans: “I have no intention of putting on a performance, I am no longer interested in theatrical glory. For me to put on one production more or one production less has no meaning for me. What is important for me is to communicate my store of knowledge to you” (Toporkov 108).

²⁴ According to Benedetti, Stanislavsky was “familiar with the theory of Taylorism, the break-down of complex manufacturing processes into a sequence of simple actions on a production-line” (*A Biography* 164). Jonathan Pitches also points out that “given the place of Taylorism in Russia at the time ... we may not be too surprised by Stanislavsky’s affinity with Taylorism” (*Science and the Stanislavsky Tradition of Acting* 32).

imagination is concerned, Stanislavsky proposed two different pathways for its achievement: working either from the inside out, in other words exploring the ways a theatrical character can be accessed initially on a psychological or emotional level and letting the character's outer form emerge as a reflection of this inner established connection; or, conversely, from outwards inwards, i.e. giving primary emphasis to the character's physical aspect so as to let the external associations evoke the desired emotions. However, as Benedetti points out,

“... the System[’s] formulation depended on Stanislavski’s capacity to analyse his own practice and that practice could not, except within certain general limits, be anticipated. It always produced change. There [was] a constant time-lag between personal practice ... and the System as publicly proclaimed” (*Stanislavski: A Biography* 209).

Although the emotional sterility Stanislavsky experienced during the aforementioned incident of 1906 led him instinctively to concentrate his efforts on the investigation of the psychological communication between actor and dramatic character, he had to wait until 1909 for the psychological aspect of the System to be put to the test in a performance and another three years, until the creation of the First Studio in 1912, for the particular creative pathway to be adopted as the official training method of the Moscow Art Theatre’s actors. In the meantime, however, Stanislavsky noted that external stimuli and simple physical actions could also be used as an elicitor of emotions.²⁵ It would not be, however, until the late 1920’s that he would start experimenting on the System’s physical aspect.²⁶ One of the unforeseen consequences of this time-delay was that many of his actor-

²⁵ While preparing for the role of General Krutiski in Alexandr Ostrovsky’s play *Enough Stupidity in Every Wise Man*, Stanislavsky found himself unable to “feel” his character. Visiting an orphans’ court he accidentally saw “an old fellow ... writing, writing, writing, like General Krutiski, plans which were of no use to anybody” (qtd. in Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 210). Stanislavsky recognised in this old man the “personality of this decaying general, who had power without sense, but had symbolised a whole era and a whole section of Russian society” (ibid. 210).

²⁶ The “development of a methodology and an exploration of the Method of Physical Action” (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 338) did not begin officially until the creation of the Moscow Art Theatre’s Opera-Dramatic Studio in 1935, a short three years prior to Stanislavsky’s death.

students did not have the opportunity to work on or even to learn about the latest developments of the master's System.

Shortly after the Russian revolution of 1917 many of his pupils left the country and settled in Western Europe and the USA. Michael Chekhov, Richard Boleslavsky and Maria Ouspenskaya, three of the First Studio's founding members who were to play an important role in the transmission and interpretation of Stanislavsky's System outside Russia, were among them. Despite the fact that Europe, particularly Germany²⁷, had already enthusiastically welcomed the results of Stanislavsky's work nearly twenty years earlier, the American audience's overwhelming reception during the Moscow Art Theatre's second tour outside Russia in 1923²⁸ led to his working methodology acquiring nearly mythical qualities.²⁹ Stanislavsky's success in the US was far from accidental. In addition to the advanced publicity the Moscow Art Theatre's productions had acquired through the accounts of émigré artists³⁰, the reports of Americans who had already seen Stanislavsky's work in Europe and in Moscow, and the numerous articles that appeared in magazines and newspapers prior to the company's tour (all of which ultimately led to the largest advance sale "on record for any dramatic company, whether playing in English or a foreign language" [Edwards 226]), the American theatrical system was at a turning point when Stanislavsky visited the country. According to John Frick,

"For roughly the first 120 years of the American theatre's existence, the basic organizational unit had been the resident stock-repertory company, which was functionally autonomous, generally identified with a specific theatre, and located permanently (or semipermanently) in a city with a population sufficient to support it. ... The stock company

²⁷ During its first foreign tour the Moscow Art Theatre performed in Dresden, Leipzig, Prague, Vienna, Frankfurt and Berlin.

²⁸ America had already been introduced to the Russian art twenty years earlier through the performances of Russian artists of the stage and of ballet.

²⁹ Describing in a letter to his wife the success the troupe's tour enjoyed in the US, Stanislavsky admitted: "We never, not once, had such a success, not in Moscow, not in other cities. Here they say that it is not a success, but a discovery" (qtd. in Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 21).

³⁰ According to Sharon Carnicke, among the artists who "already resided and worked in the US when Stanislavsky arrived" were Rakhmaninov, Shaliapin, and Ben-Ami (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 16).

was organised as a resident acting company headed by a manager who assumed responsibility for selecting a season that would please local audiences, for hiring personnel, and for maintaining the theatre building. ... Theatre managers regarded themselves as both artists and businesspeople and felt no need to distinguish between the commercial, aesthetic, and social missions of their theatres. By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, progressive managers and writers, dissatisfied with the constrictions and decadence of the commercial theatre ... asserted their independence from the theatrical establishment, repudiated their middle-class benefactors, and created an alternative theatre culture” (199-222).

The result of this revolution was the rapid displacement of the old stock companies by combination companies, which were “a theatrical ‘package’ or combination of performers (and often design and technical elements) in support of a star, formed or combined for the run of a single play” (ibid. 200). Furthermore, it led a series of small companies, which emerged all over the country, to experiment with the practice of an ensemble. This transition was also accompanied by “a tendency toward an ever more realistic, or ‘natural,’ style of acting steadily mounted through the last decades of the nineteenth century” as a result of the introduction to the American stage of “the contemporary realistic drama, both native and foreign, ... the development of modern psychology with its interest in the complexities of consciousness”, and finally the influence individual performers, such as Tommaso Salvini and Eleonora Duse, had on the American audience through their lifelike portrayals (Watermeier 468). As was only natural, Stanislavsky’s actors mesmerised the American audience through “their excellent ensemble, the utter naturalness and lifelike quality of their productions, and the fact that they seemed to be ‘living’ their roles instead of ‘performing’ them” (Edwards 230). According to Sharon Carnicke, the actors’ “incomprehensible Russian proved advantageous by focusing the attention away from the texts of their plays and onto their acting, [leading the audience to react] to the performances as to silent movies that transcend verbal communication” (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 18). However, as Edwards points out,

“the lasting effect upon American acting ... was not accomplished by the performances of the Moscow Art Theatre alone. They served to father the desire, as it were, in the American actor to make his acting more realistic, more truthful, more truly creative, and they prepared the ground for further study of Stanislavsky’s System. ... It was chiefly through members of the First Studio, however, that Americans came to know Stanislavsky’s method of working. Some of the actors and actresses remained in America when the Moscow Art Theatre left; others came later” (239).

Boleslavsky and Ouspenskaya were among those who stayed in America after the end of the tour and the first ones to teach the master’s System.³¹ A short time after the rest of the company had returned to Russia, Stanislavsky’s former pupils founded the American Laboratory Theatre where for seven consecutive years they would transmit the principles of the creative process he had advocated to a generation of American theatre professionals who were to shape the future of acting. After the dissolution of the ALT for financial reasons in 1931, three of its members – the drama critic and theatre director Harold Clurman, actress and producer Cheryl Crawford, and actor and director Lee Strasberg – decided to continue training according to Stanislavsky’s principles and formed the Group Theatre, which lasted until 1941. Still, as Jean Benedetti argues, it is crucial to ask

“even when the credentials of one of Stanislavski’s pupils are impeccable, at what period they worked with him and which particular version of the System they learned. Stanislavsky’s working methods evolved constantly over the years, and what was true for 1924 would not necessarily be true for 1934” (*Stanislavski: An Introduction* 266).

When Stanislavsky’s former pupils talked to the American actors and directors for the first time about Concentration, Memory of Emotion, Dramatic Action, Characterization, Observation and Rhythm, in other words about what they had learned at the Russian First Studio, Stanislavsky himself had already moved on to explore the physical aspect of his

³¹ Stanislavsky gave his permission to Boleslavsky to deliver six lectures on the System at the Princess Theatre “only eight days after the Moscow Art Theatre opened in New York” in 1923, (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 36).

System.³² Although the antithesis between what the Americans were learning and what Stanislavsky was working on would eventually become clear in 1934³³, the emphasis that the former were to place on the psychological aspect of the System is not to be solely attributed to Boleslavsky and Ouspenskaya's unfamiliarity with Stanislavsky's latest work. According to Robert Leach (48) and Sharon Carnicke, the Method, as the American version of Stanislavsky's teachings was to become known, mirrored the country's "obsession with the Freudian model of the mind by employing therapeutic techniques meant to free the inhibited actor from long-lived repressions" (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 57-58). Contrary to Stanislavsky, who drew upon psychology only in order to understand the nature of human emotions – how they may influence our physical actions and how, conversely, they can be aroused by them – and upon the philosophy of Yoga in order to prepare the actors' mind and body for the exploration of the characters' emotions and physical actions, the Americans favoured personal associations between actor and character as the only key necessary for unlocking emotional content. The yoga "laws of correct breathing [*pranayama*], the correct position of the body [*asana*], concentration and watchful discrimination [*dharana*]" which, according to Stanislavsky, his "whole system is based on" (Magarshack, *Stanislavsky On the Art* 116-117)³⁴ were bluntly dismissed as they were deemed not "a necessary foundation for acting" (Strasberg, *A Dream* 105). Stanislavsky's

³² The reason for capitalising these six concepts is that they also were the topics Boleslavsky gave his lectures on. In 1933 Theatre Arts Books published the content of these lectures under the title *Acting: The First Six Lessons*.

³³ Three years after the formation of the Group Theatre, one of its members, actress Stella Adler, "unhappy with Strasberg's emphasis on emotion" (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 59) travelled to Paris to study under Stanislavsky himself, who decided that he "had to take her on, if only to restore the reputation of [his] method" (Filippov 59). Stanislavsky worked with Adler for more than a month on her part in Howard Lawson's play *The Gentlewoman* explaining to her his latest ideas on the physical side of the System. Upon her return to the US, Adler spoke to the members of the Group Theatre about these "then unfamiliar aspects of the System" challenging the authority of Lee Strasberg (ibid. 60). His response was that "he taught the Strasberg Method and not the Stanislavski System" (Lewis, *Slings and Arrows* 71).

³⁴ David Magarshack, who translated the particular extract of Stanislavsky's writings, did not include in his work the original yoga terminology used for these three laws. The terms mentioned in brackets are to be found in William H. Wegner's article "The Creative Circle: Stanislavsky and Yoga" (87).

work after his return to Russia as well as the publication of his writings proved to be inadequate to uproot the oral tradition of his System in America.³⁵

After the Group Theatre disbanded, the dissemination of Stanislavsky's ideas continued in the US not only through other former Russian pupils who came to America at a later time (such as Michael Chekhov, the nephew of the playwright) but also through the work of the Group's former members who either went on to form their own groups or joined already existing ones. The most notable among them were Sanford Meisner's Neighbourhood Playhouse, Stella Adler's Conservatory of Acting, and of course the Actors' Studio, which was founded in 1947 by Elia Kazan, Cheryl Crawford, Robert Lewis, and Anna Sokolow and came under the direction of Lee Strasberg in 1951. For many it was the undisputable impact the alumni³⁶ of these groups had on acting, particularly cinema acting, during the 1950s and 1960s that significantly enlarged the sphere of influence of Stanislavsky's ideas³⁷, causing them "to loop back to Europe through the American filter" (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 6).³⁸ For others, the seeds of Stanislavskian thinking were planted in Europe, particularly in the UK, long before Stanislavsky's work became widely

³⁵ Stella Adler's introduction of Stanislavsky's latest work on the Method of Physical Actions to the members of the Group Theatre did also little to change the conception of the System in the U.S. Stanislavsky's American followers preferred to investigate the psychological aspect of his acting theory than to follow him in the exploration of the bidirectional way in which the indissoluble link between psyche and body functions.

³⁶ Among the most notable graduates of the programs offered by these three groups are Marlon Brando, Julie Harris, Herbert Berghof, Montgomery Clift and others. In the years that followed actors such as Robert De Niro, Al Pacino, Dustin Hoffmann, Harvey Keitel, Robert Duvall, Gene Hackman and others graduated from the Actors' Studio.

³⁷ Similarly, the close Sino-Soviet relations during the 1950s allowed Stanislavsky's ideas to be spread in China through the Soviet experts who were invited to drama institutes in Beijing and Shanghai to "train an army of artists and teachers" (Sun 141).

³⁸ According Kathy Dacre, it is rather ironical that it was "not those who experimented with Stanislavski's ideas in the UK, but those who expounded his ideas in the USA who feature as the conduit of influence on contemporary UK practice" (6). Robert Gordon brings forward a similar suggestion arguing that "Stanislavski's praxis had very little impact on the British theatre until the 1960s. [He] was just a name to most British actors, and there was widespread misunderstanding of his theories" (71). Offering his own explanation for this, Robert Leach maintains that "the British theatre has always resisted systems, and even technique, preferring to believe in the myth of the untutored genius" (*Makers of Modern Theatre* 46). As he points out, however, there were a few practitioners in Britain "who acknowledged Stanislavsky's mastery", such as the founders of Theatre Workshop, Joan Littlewood and Ewan MacColl, as well as Michael Redgrave, who "also adopted at least some of Stanislavsky's ideas" (ibid. 46).

known.³⁹ Whichever route Stanislavsky's technique may have taken to infiltrate the American and European actor training culture, however, there is little doubt that the imprint his work left on both continents was deep enough that it continues to be visible to this day. One of the latest evidences about Stanislavsky's impact on today's European acting came to the fore in 2008 when Professor Kathy Dacre at Rose Bruford College was placed in charge of the "first funded research report on the teaching of Stanislavski's ideas in the UK school and HE curriculum" (Dacre 3), a project that was initiated by the Standing Conference of University Drama Departments in conjunction with the Higher Education Academy Subject Centre for Dance, Drama and Music (PALATINE). The project included six case studies – three with 16+ students and teachers in schools and a Further Education College, and three with teachers and students in Higher Education Institutions, including the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. Summarising the research's findings, which were published in 2009, Dacre points out that

"It is surprising that for teachers of acting and for those who teach the history of theatre in the UK Stanislavski still remains at the forefront of important practitioners and has held the curriculum of so many acting schools in his thrall for such a time. As Sergei Tcherkasski from the St. Petersburg Academy of Theatre Arts says in his interview, we would not expect a contemporary physicist to be following the precepts of Isaac Newton" (ibid. 4).

However exaggerated it may seem, Tcherkasski's comparison of Stanislavsky to Isaac Newton is not completely inappropriate. Stanislavsky's approach to acting was as revolutionary for the world of theatre at the beginning of the twentieth century as the

³⁹ Jonathan Pitches strongly contests the idea that "the Russian tradition of actor bypassed Britain on its way to the United States" ("Introduction" 1). As he points out, with reference particularly to Stanislavsky, the main reason behind the emphasis placed by many scholars on the American tradition of Stanislavsky's proposed technique is that contrary to the "relatively clear and well-documented route" the System's transmission followed in the US (ibid. 3), its absorption by the British theatrical system took place in a more "latent, even unspoken" manner ("Conclusion" 192). In 2012 Pitches set out to debunk this myth editing a collection of articles, which were published under the title *Russians in Britain: The British Theatre and the Russian Tradition of Actor Training* and aimed at tracing the influence Russian actor training has had on modern British theatre.

formulation of the laws of motion had been for the world of physics in the seventeenth century. Both described something so fundamental to the nature of their respective disciplines that once brought forward it was simply impossible to be unlearned. Yet despite providing such a vital theoretical underpinning for the actor's training even in our time, we should not think of the application of Stanislavsky's work today in systemic terms. Or rather, we cannot. Theatre has evolved in an extremely rich variety of ways, both in terms of form and content, in the years that separate us from Stanislavsky's first documented appearance on a theatrical stage at the age of seven in 1870. This evolution led to the creation of different types of plays, the presentation of varying styles of performances, the emergence of new techniques of directing, and, of course, the development of new approaches to the actors' training.⁴⁰ The problem with assessing the applicability of Stanislavsky's theories, however, lies not in the assumption that his approach is suitable only for the creation of a particular form of theatre, e.g. the realistic staging of a naturalistic play, and that it cannot cope with the diversity and complexity of today's theatrical practice. It is rather to be found primarily in the tacit nature of theatrical knowledge. As Sharon Carnicke points out, theatrical knowledge is generated mainly through practice and "becomes shared in lore more satisfactorily than in theoretical books" (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 66). This means that aside from being studied whenever possible in its written form, each approach to acting is also individualised by each performer in his or her own way and "passed from generation to generation, amended and modified by each actor and teacher" who ever used it, creating endless multiplicity (ibid. 67).⁴¹ As Dacre points out, for example, "Dee Cannon, one of the three acting teachers currently at RADA, traces her own

⁴⁰ At the same time it has also caused approaches from the past to resurface and be brought to the fore. As Michael Billington points out, for example, "the growth of physical theatre has led to a renewed interest in Meyerhold, with his use of techniques adopted from sport and the circus. Parisian mime has also been given a British inflexion" (6).

⁴¹ The same holds arguably also for the terminology each theoretician and practitioner used. As Gordon points out in the case of Stanislavsky, for example, his "notions of motivation and character biography have entered the actor's vocabulary and are used by actors who may not even be aware of their derivation" (88).

connection to the teachings of Stanislavski directly back to her mother, Doreen [who in turn] inherited much of her knowledge from studying with Uta Hagen and Herbert Berghof” (61).⁴² In addition to the “verbal approximations, subtle restatements, parables, and metaphors” infiltrating it through oral tradition, one also needs to take into account that theatrical knowledge is a “pragmatic system” that is able to “contain mutually contradictory ideas as theory can not; it can evolve and shift dynamically from day to day as need demands, with each practitioner tinkering and adjusting it to suit the moment” (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 67). This means that theatre professionals may draw simultaneously upon competing acting theories during the course of their work, without necessarily being fully aware that are doing so. Exploring how Stanislavsky is being taught at RADA, for example, Dacre points out that “with each teacher there was no clear evidence offered that any of their students were invited to consider that they had been working with Stanislavski’s ideas” (63). Tracing the emergence of Stanislavsky’s work into the British conservatoire tradition from the 1920s to the 1950s, David Shirley brings forward a similar suggestion arguing that “many acting teachers in the UK who are likely to have taught aspects of the System would not necessarily have acknowledged Stanislavsky or any of his followers as their source” (40).

As it is impossible not only to determine whether and in what way any given acting professional would choose to use Stanislavsky’s work, or, for that matter, any other acting theory, in order to draw inspiration from, but also to specify which version or tradition of the particular theory he or she would rely upon, we will consider the question of the usefulness and applicability of Stanislavsky’s approach to today’s acting to be irrelevant to the scope of this thesis. Nor will we engage in the never-ending debate on whether or not his “philosophical and psychological observations as such [were] profound [or] original”

⁴² Hagen had worked with Harold Clurman in 1947 in a production of *A Streetcar Named Desire* before teaming up with Herbert Berghof who had previously worked as a teacher at Meisner’s Neighborhood Playhouse.

(Edie 304), whether “the Stanislavsky System is really only a conscious codification of ideas about acting which have always been the property of most good actors of all countries whether they knew it or not” (Houghton 57), or whether his “theoretical books are a lot of trash [as] they are unimplementable, and, thus, useless for the actor” (Mamet 40). Not only because our aim is to explore Stanislavsky’s proposed System from the perspective of the drama translator and not that of the actor but also because to insist on believing that Stanislavsky’s System is a straightjacket that has the power to exercise complete control over an actor’s choices and should therefore be considered of limited usefulness to theatre professionals today means not only to overlook the historical conditions that led to its creation and to ignore the emphasis today’s actor training programs place on eschewing the notion of a comprehensive system of acting but also, and most importantly, to turn a blind eye to the fact that “effective practice is more important to artists than the accurate understanding of theory” or its faithful application (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 66). After all, Stanislavsky himself was also fully aware of the way theatrical knowledge is generated, transmitted, and applied. As he clearly points out addressing the future actors who were going to become acquainted with his work through its written form, “You must absorb and filter any system through yourself, make it your own, retain its essentials and develop it in your own way” (*An Actor’s Work: A Student’s Diary*, xxv). Considering this, it would seem more suitable to think of Stanislavsky’s work as an attempt not to impose an incontrovertible dogma on theatre professionals in training but rather to create a permanent account of the *acting lore* by “capturing the practice of acting in words” (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 67). And as we will see in the section to follow, this proved to be an extremely difficult and complicated undertaking.

I.2. Stanislavsky in Print: Creation, Manipulation and Translation

Despite believing firmly “that all masters of the arts need to write ... to try and systematise their art” (Filippov 58), Stanislavsky resisted publishing his ideas for years, fearing that once printed they would lose their experimental and provisional nature. It wasn’t until he was faced with serious financial problems that he decided to present them publicly in written form. The lucrative offers the American publishers made to him during the Moscow Art Theatre’s tours in the U.S. for a book on a topic of his choice presented an excellent opportunity to recover from the impact the Russian Revolution had on his finances, and to pay for the medical treatment of his son who suffered from tuberculosis.⁴³ Consequently when Little, Brown, and Company turned down his initial idea about a book on the System, Stanislavsky had no choice but to comply with the publisher’s request for a “popular autobiography” (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 268). The American edition of the hastily written *My Life In Art* was translated chapter by chapter by J.J. Robbins and published in 1924 right after the end of the Moscow Art Theatre’s second tour in the United States.⁴⁴ It was also in 1924 that Stanislavsky came to meet Norman Hapgood, a journalist and theatre critic, and his wife and future translator of Stanislavsky’s works, Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood.⁴⁵ Knowing that his memoirs would “inevitably acquire a political significance” (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 269) once published in the Soviet Union, Stanislavsky reworked the Russian typescript for two years until 1926 when the

⁴³ Stanislavsky’s family owned a factory that made “gold and silver thread” (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 3). After the revolution the factory as well as his home and his property were confiscated by the state.

⁴⁴ More information about the “hasty and inconvenient circumstances in which [Stanislavsky’s autobiography] was composed” as well as about J.J. Robbins’ translational choices can be found in Laurence Senelick’s article “Stanislavsky’s Double *Life in Art*” (201).

⁴⁵ The occasion on which Stanislavsky met Norman and Elizabeth Hapgood was when the latter was asked by the organisers of the tour to act as an interpreter for the company members during their upcoming audience with Calvin Coolidge at the White House since, as she recalls in her article “Stanislavski in America”, “no one in the President’s entourage could pronounce the actors’ names” (19).

book was finally published in Moscow with a slightly different content to its American counterpart.⁴⁶

In 1930, before setting out to write his second book, Stanislavsky signed a legal agreement with Elizabeth Hapgood giving her “power of attorney over all publications and translations into any language for his current and future books” (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 75). The reasons behind this extraordinary contract were of a financial and legal nature. Since the Soviet Union did not subscribe to international copyright law, Stanislavsky could not secure full copyright or royalty protection. Elizabeth Hapgood, on the other hand, being an American citizen, could easily acquire the copyright insuring the protection of Stanislavsky’s and his heirs’ financial and legal interests. Due to the book’s extreme length, Stanislavsky agreed to have it published in two separate parts. The first volume entitled *The Actor: Work on Oneself, Part I: The Process of Re-Experiencing* discussing the psychological aspect of the System, was translated by Hapgood and published in 1936 in the U.S under the title *An Actor Prepares*. The outbreak of the Second World War and Stanislavsky’s death in 1938, the year the Russian edition of *An Actor Prepares* was published, delayed the American publication of the second part, which concentrated on the physical aspect of the System.⁴⁷ This was finally published in 1949 under the title *Building A Character* instead of the originally planned *The Actor: Work on*

⁴⁶ Despite “Stalin’s unique relationship to the Moscow Art Theatre” (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 78), Stanislavsky feared that the Soviet avant-garde, which had already expressed its disapproval of his bourgeois repertory choices, would castigate and ostracise him as it did with authors Evgeny Zamyatin and Boris Pilnyak who had also published abroad. Although by adding a chapter in the Russian edition of autobiography expressing his views on the recently established Socialist Realism as the Communist Party’s official doctrine for the arts he managed temporarily to evade censorship, he requested that the particular chapter would not be included in the future reprints of the book’s English version. According to Jean Benedetti, the translated chapter “was on its way to the publisher when Stanislavsky sent a telegram stopping it. He gave no reason” (“A History” 270).

⁴⁷ It took Stanislavsky’s son, Igor, nine years to send “a selection of the innumerable variants of almost every passage” to Elizabeth Hapgood in New York and an additional two years for her to cut, rework and translate the material (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 272).

Oneself, Part II: The Process of Embodiment.⁴⁸ Yet once again, for reasons unknown, an important part of Stanislavsky's writings was left out of the books' English-language versions. The remaining three books accredited to him – i.e. *Creating A Role*, *An Actor's Handbook*, *Stanislavsky On the Art of the Stage*, and *Stanislavski's Legacy* all published in the early 1960s – are, in Jean Benedetti's words, "editorial reconstructions based on existing drafts and notes" and not completed works authorised by Stanislavsky for publication (*Stanislavski: An Introduction* xi).

With the exception of *My Life In Art*, which, as was mentioned earlier, is an autobiographical account, Stanislavsky's *An Actor Prepares*, *Building A Character* and *Creating A Role* were written in the form of an invented prose narrative aiming at presenting, in Stanislavsky's words, "the 'System' in a novel" (qtd. in Carnicke, "Stanislavsky's System" 6). By creating an imagined classroom and keeping for himself the roles of the teacher, Tortsov, and one of the students, Nazvanov, Stanislavsky "portrays rather than explains, the process and practice of acting" (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 68) to the young actors and actresses that surround him, using either general examples or specific case studies from plays such as Griboyedov's *Woe from Wit* or Shakespeare's *Othello*.⁴⁹ His ideas are verbalised in a vivid and simple manner by the use of a rich variety of "metaphors, parables, and analogies" (ibid. 8) for, as he cautions in the introduction of the first Russian edition of *An Actor Prepares*, one "cannot talk to actors in dry, scientific language" (Stanislavski, "How to Talk" 30). Stanislavsky particularly insisted that any

⁴⁸ The preface Stanislavsky wrote for the first Russian version of *An Actor Prepares* explaining the connection between the two volumes and announcing two more books, one that would concern "working on the role" and another one offering "recommended exercises", never found its way to the English speaking readership and neither did his projected books (Hobgood, "Stanislavski's Preface" 223).

⁴⁹ As one might have expected, neither the names nor the character traits Stanislavsky chose for his imaginary students were accidental. As Sharon M. Carnicke explains, "Govorkov ... means 'the talker ... Velyaminova ... signifies ... intensity ... Shustov forms a direct genealogical link to nineteenth century traditions of acting ... Maloletkova (meaning 'Of Tender Years') combines humility, innate talent and enthusiasm" (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 68). However, as she points out elsewhere, "all the names of the students in the English version are nicknames, while the Russian uses only the students' full formal names. ... [T]he students seem younger, less experienced and even less serious-minded" ("An Actor Prepares" 493).

scientific terms used in his writings, such as *subconscious* or *intuition* for instance, are to be understood “in their everyday, simplest connotation” and not perceived as an invocation of science for the validation of his ideas (ibid. 30). Admittedly this was not how Stanislavsky approached science at the beginning of his career when he was emphasising that every actor must know the “indubitable, completely conscious, tried by science and found true, and binding on all” laws that permeate the physical and psychological aspect of his System (*My Life in Art* 483). The reasons behind this distancing from the scientific overtones of his formulations were not only artistic (, in the sense that he had come to realise that the book was based on ideas that “no longer represented his current view” [Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 272],) but also political.⁵⁰

According to Sharon Carnicke, “soviet control over the arts had grown gradually but steadily after the 1917 revolution” (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 31). All theatres, including the Moscow Art Theatre, were nationalised in 1919 and the freedom that artists enjoyed during the first years after the revolution and which had allowed Stanislavsky to travel to the US, came to a halt with the emergence of censorship in 1923 when he was still abroad. Despite being “heralded ... with mythic praise” for his achievements by the Soviet press (Carnicke, “Stanislavsky: Unabridged and Uncensored” 22), Stanislavsky was confronted with the regime’s compliance control mechanisms for the arts. Referring particularly to the literary system, André Lefevere argues that such control is exerted both within as well as outside the system. Terming the outer control “patronage” (15), Lefevere points out that it consists of three factors: the “ideological component”, which is not limited to the prevailing political ideology but should be understood as the “dominant concept of what society should (be allowed to) be”; “the economic component”, in other words the patron’s assurance of the author’s livelihood; and finally the “element of status”, i.e. the writer’s

⁵⁰ According to Benedetti, Stanislavsky himself was not “a political sophisticate. He had no conception of the ideological issues involved and no knowledge of Marxist theory. It was not, indeed, until 1926 that he even considered reading the basic texts of Lenin” (*Stanislavski: A Biography* 235).

recognition (ibid. 14-16). All three of these controlling components appear to have been at play in Stanislavsky's case. His prestige was secure in his homeland yet not without a price. Although Stanislavsky was allowed to keep his position as head of the Moscow Art Theatre and receiving high governmental honours, such as the title "People's Artist of the USSR", Stalin's policy of "isolate but preserve" (Smeliansky 9) meant that he was to confine himself to his apartment in Leontevsky Alley, which "Stalin managed to rename Stanislavsky Street" (ibid, 9). Like all artists living and creating under totalitarian regimes, Stanislavsky too was economically dependent on his state patrons. It took the Commissar for Enlightenment's "plea with Lenin" for Stanislavsky not to get evicted from his house in 1920 (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 15), and Stanislavsky had to write a letter to Stalin before Nemirovich-Danchenko could receive "the material possibility to return" from Italy to Moscow in 1933 after his tour in Europe (qtd. in Smeliansky 11).

As far as the control operating within the literary system is concerned, Lefevere points out that it is exerted by "professionals [such as] critics, reviewers, teachers, translators" whose task it is to implement and safeguard a specific "poetics" defined as the "dominant concept of what literature should be (allowed to be)" (14). Stanislavsky was also confronted with this type of control. Since his terminology was not aligned with the "predominant trends in ... behaviourist psychology" (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 81) of the 1930s post-revolutionary Russia that was promoting Marxist dialectical materialism, "a commission was appointed specifically to vet" *An Actor Prepares* (Carnicke, "Stanislavsky: Unabridged and Uncensored" 25). In an attempt to evade the censorship of his writings by his ideological attackers who accused him of "'idealism' and 'biologism'" (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 272), Stanislavsky was forced to reformulate his concepts renouncing any claims to the scientific legitimacy of his ideas, striking out passages referring to Yoga and speaking about his proposed "psychotechnique in

engineering metaphors, echoing the Socialist Realist truism that the artist is the ‘engineer of the soul’” (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 82). Yet, whereas it was the Russian regime’s “undifferentiated patronage” (Lefevere 17) that made Stanislavsky rephrase his initial conceptions according to the decrees of the dominant ideology, the rendering of his formulations in English, “a language he could neither speak nor read” (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 5), were submitted to a less obvious but equally influential type of manipulation.

On the level of creation Stanislavsky was confronted not only with the critique of the Soviet intelligentsia but also with himself. He was relentlessly rewriting every single passage, exhaustively expanding and constantly altering every single idea and, more often than not, unintentionally repeating what he had already written.⁵¹ Working directly with the translator and the editor of his writings, although theoretically advantageous, created in fact an additional problem: whatever editing suggestions Norman Hapgood had to make needed to be translated into Russian for Stanislavsky’s approval. He would then counter-propose an idea, which Elizabeth Hapgood translated back into English for her husband. The same process had to be repeated until both Stanislavsky and the Hapgoods were satisfied with the result. As was only natural, Stanislavsky’s obsessive revising and the time-consuming translational process followed delayed the submission of his manuscripts, inevitably forcing the publishing houses to threaten to terminate their contracts. What aggravated Stanislavsky’s self-censorship, however, were neither the editing suggestions of Norman and Elizabeth Hapgood nor the time limitations imposed by the publishing houses but rather the latter’s demand for a comprehensive, not too Russian, book. Yale University Press, Elizabeth Hapgood’s first choice for *An Actor Prepares*, rejected the book “on the

⁵¹ Burnet M. Hobgood reports in her article “Stanislavski’s Books: An Untold Story” on Elizabeth Hapgood’s strenuous efforts during the writing of *An Actor Prepares* to remind Stanislavsky that however necessary repetitiousness may be in rehearsals, it is redundant when it comes to writing a book, a remark that “would make him roar with laughter and kiss [her] hands with gratitude for pointing [it] out” (157).

grounds that there were not a dozen people who would know what it was about” (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 273). Theatre Arts Books editor, Edith J. R. Isaacs, despite agreeing to publish it, expressed her reservations regarding the book’s form which, according to her account, was not “accessible to English-speaking readers” (qtd. in Hobgood, “Stanislavski’s Books” 159). Stanislavsky turned to his co-workers to help him with the completion of his work. In the case of *My Life in Art* it was Aleksandr Koiransky, a Russian émigré living in the US who had befriended Stanislavsky in 1923, who was asked to step up and write the book’s last paragraph in order for it to be sent on time to the publisher. In *An Actor Prepares* Elizabeth Hapgood was granted even more freedom by Stanislavsky who gave her a *chèque en blanc* to “cut all [she] like[s] but ... not re-write” (ibid. 159), a decision that, as we will see, resulted in a series of inconsistencies and discrepancies.

Over time the translations of Stanislavsky’s books have been examined in depth by a variety of theatre practitioners and theoreticians either against the original Russian versions or other, often unauthorised, translations.⁵² The differences found between the source and the target texts led to “vociferous protests” on the part of scholars (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 275) and to the Theatre Art Books management decision to conduct a thorough comparison between the English and the Russian texts. The results of that comparison were summed up in “a notarised statement” in which it was declared that “nothing substantial had been eliminated in the editorial process” (Carnicke, “Stanislavsky: Unabridged and Uncensored” 32). Despite the publisher’s effort to protect and support Elizabeth Hapgood’s translational choices, an examination of the examples brought forward by several scholars revealed that there were in fact reasons to doubt whether she managed to render Stanislavsky’s work in a successful way.

⁵² According to Sharon M. Carnicke, some translations “slipped past the notice of Theatre Arts Books” and were published in Argentina, Denmark, Finland and Sweden (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 77).

The significantly shorter length of the English versions of Stanislavsky's books is one of the most commonly used examples to indicate that some, if not a lot, of what Stanislavsky wrote was left untranslated. The 575 pages of the Russian edition of *An Actor Prepares*, for example, shrank to 295 "from a typescript of approximately 700 pages" when the book was translated and published in English (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 83). The explanation Hapgood offered for this condensation was that "to eliminate duplications and to cut whatever was meaningless for non-Russian actors" was part of her task, "entrusted to [her] by Stanislavski himself" (Stanislavski, *Creating A Role* xi). According to Jean Benedetti, however, in her attempt to simultaneously fulfil Stanislavsky's wishes and comply with the demands for abridgment made by the management of Theatre Arts Books, Hapgood went far beyond tidying up Stanislavsky's work. Heavily criticising her translational skills, Benedetti points out that in the case of *An Actor Prepares* she had failed "adequately to distinguish, and consistently to translate, terms such as 'to behave' (*deisvovat*), 'to do' (*delat*), and 'to act' (*igrat*), which, for Stanislavski have distinct meanings. ... All three verbs [were] translated, in different contexts by 'act'." (*A History of Stanislavski* 275-276).

Seen from a translational perspective, one could argue that Hapgood's choices interfered with Stanislavsky's text primarily on two levels. On the first level they brought about a shift in style. They induced, in other words, a change to the expressive level of the text, by attributing a linguistic naivety to Stanislavsky. It would be hard to imagine that the director who dedicated his life's work to the separation of pretence and genuine, real feeling on stage did not have the linguistic proficiency to distinguish between the subtle nuances of *acting*, *behaving* and *doing* and subsequently to communicate his understanding of these three different states to his students.

The second level on which Hapgood's rendering of the terms in question can be thought to have interfered with Stanislavsky's work is what Karl Bühler terms as the *Appelfunktion* of the language (32), i.e. its "vocative function" (Reiss, "Text Types" 108): by reading only that they need to *act* and not to *behave* in a certain way or to *do* something, Stanislavsky's readers are no longer invited to carry out a different action each time. According to Katharina Reiss, however,

"[i]f the [source language] text is written to convey persuasively structured contents in order to trigger off impulses of behaviour, then the contents conveyed in the [target language] must be capable of triggering off analogous impulses of behaviour in the [target language] reader. ... The psychological mechanism of persuasive language should be adapted to the needs of the new language community" ("Type, Kind and Individuality of Text" 168).

By not attempting to *trigger off* in the text's target language readers' behavioural responses *analogous* to those the source text's verbs call for, Hapgood's translation alters the objective of persuasion and thereby renders it unattainable. Furthermore, considering that the writer is a man of the theatre, one could suggest that when confronted with his reference to *acting*, the text's readers are more likely to interpret it as a call for affectation. As Sharon M. Carnicke points out, however, Stanislavsky "discounts the ... more commonly used word for acting because it implies pretence [claiming] that [in order] to act one must do something as if it were real; one must behave, not play" ("An Actor" 492).

In direct opposition to the way Hapgood offered a single translation of different terms, she also proposed different renderings of a single term. As Carnicke points out, Hapgood chose to translate Stanislavsky's reference to *experiencing* as "'the art of living a part', 'to live the scene', 'sensations', 'living and experiencing', 'experience', 'emotional experience,' and finally 'creation'" (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 109). Despite the fact that one can clearly recognise Hapgood's honest effort to grasp the various nuances of the term in

question, Carnicke is arguably right to maintain that such inconsistency prevents the reader from identifying *experiencing* as a “discrete concept, which Stanislavsky struggles to establish and define” (ibid. 109).

Another interesting point in examining Hapgood’s translations is the effect her omissions had on non-actors’ understanding of Stanislavsky. For example, in his article “Stanislavski and Freud”, “comparing the intellects” of the Russian director and the Austrian neurologist, John J. Sullivan in quotes the following abstracts from *An Actor Prepares*:⁵³

“The fundamental aim of our art is the creation of this **inner life of the human spirit**, and its expression in an artistic form.

As you progress you will learn more and more ways in which to stimulate your subconscious selves, and to draw them into your creative process, but it must be admitted that we cannot reduce **this study of the inner life of other human beings** to a scientific technique” [my emphasis] (103).⁵⁴

Believing that in both cases Stanislavsky refers to the actual *inner life of human beings*, Sullivan goes on to argue that

“[w]hile it is technically true that we cannot scientifically study anything other than another person’s behavior and reports of inner experience, as the work of Freud has shown, this by no means makes the study of mental processes impossible. ... We can say that there is for most clinical practical purposes, a method of study of individual inner life which the psychoanalytic system gives us” (ibid. 103-104).

According to Carnicke’s translation of Stanislavsky’s typescript, however, the first passage should have read:

⁵³ Further information on the relation between Stanislavsky and Freud can be found in Donald Freed’s work *Freud and Stanislavski* as well as in Natalie Crohn-Schmitt’s article “Stanislavski, Creativity, and the Unconscious”.

⁵⁴ The passages Sullivan quotes in his article are to be found in pages 14 and 88-89 in the 1961 translation of Stanislavsky’s work.

“The fundamental aim of our art is the creation of **the human life of the spirit of the role** and its expression in an artistic form” (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 84).

Apparently Hapgood either misinterpreted Stanislavsky, or saw an opportunity to cut a few words on the grounds of repetition. What Stanislavsky is arguably attempting to point out is that the actors’ goal is to give flesh and blood to the words and the spirit of the characters, to give them a human perspective. The only way for the actor to do that successfully is to think of the character as if he or she were a real person. As there is no scientific method that can do that for them, Stanislavsky maintains, actors cannot but use their own experiences in order to put together the pieces of the characters’ inner world. Sullivan’s argument, that there is in fact a scientific technique that can give us access to the inner state of human beings, seems rather immaterial: Stanislavsky is solely interested in the inner life of the playwright’s fictional characters, not in that of humans. He does not suggest that his actors study themselves inwardly except in order to seek help in understanding the characters they are asked to portray.

Despite the fact that Stanislavsky’s writings, with the exception of *My Life in Art*, are primarily operative, in the sense that their aim is “the communication of content with a persuasive character” (Reiss, “Type, Kind and Individuality of Text” 163), there are also several differences to be found on their informative level. In his article “Who Was Ribot? Or: Did Stanislavsky Know Any Psychology?” Eric Bentley, underlining the differences between the English and the German translation of *An Actor Prepares* and finding the latter “admirably complete” (128), notes specifically that the references to Théodule Ribot, the psychologist from whom Stanislavsky allegedly borrowed the term *affective memory*, were blurred in the English version.⁵⁵ “Mystery is created only when a translator decides to leave

⁵⁵ The exact origins of Stanislavsky’s inspiration remain to this day unclear. According to David Magarshack, Stanislavsky decided to use the term and the concept of “affective memories” after having read Ribot’s work *Problèmes de Psychologie Affective* (*Stanislavsky: A Life* 304). Eric Bentley, on the other hand, argues that the terms *affective memory* and *emotional memory* “were common currency among

so much that is of interest”, Bentley – a leading theatre translator himself, of course – concludes (ibid. 128).

In 2008 the British publishing house Routledge promised to unravel the *mystery* surrounding Stanislavsky’s works by bringing forward two new translations: one of his autobiography, for which its original title was used, and another of *An Actor Prepares* and *Building A Character*, which were put together into a single volume under the title *An Actor’s Work: A Student’s Diary*. In 2010 these new translations were followed by a third from the same publishing house, this time of *Creating a Role*, now entitled *An Actor’s Work on a Role*. The eminent writer and critic, Jean Benedetti, created all three translations. The publication of these new translations is of particular importance to the study of Stanislavsky’s work for three main reasons. Firstly, because by reuniting the two halves of Stanislavsky’s proposed acting technique in a single volume, i.e. the psychological and the physical aspect of the System, the Routledge edition heals at last the split caused by the years that separated the publication of the different editions of his written work. By restoring the unity of his concepts, Routledge and Benedetti offer today’s reader of Stanislavsky’s work an account of a “unified, coherent psycho-physical technique ... as was originally intended” (Stanislavski, *An Actor’s Work: A Student’s Diary* xvi).

The second reason for the importance of the new translations of Stanislavsky’s writings lies in their presentation. Having studied for years and in depth not only the original Russian texts but also their translation by Hapgood, Benedetti was able to avoid falling into the terminological and conceptual traps hidden beneath the surface of Stanislavsky’s seemingly innocent prose and to deliver a translation that not only does not

psychologists” in the late 19th century and that they are also to be found in other works of Ribot (128). According to Jean Benedetti, it was on the margins of Ribot’s books *Les Maladies de la Mémoire* and *Les Maladies de la Volonté* that Stanislavsky attempted for the first time to “apply purely medical knowledge to a creative process” (Stanislavski: *A Biography* 180). Benedetti also points out that in addition to the aforementioned three books, Stanislavsky had three more works of Ribot in his library (Stanislavski: *An Introduction* 33).

suffer from the controversies that plagued the work of Stanislavsky's first translator but is also incredibly easier to follow.

The third and perhaps most important reason, however, concerns the content of the new translations of Stanislavsky's work. The Routledge edition includes not only parts of his writings that were left out of Hapgood's translation and not published elsewhere, such as Tortsov's discussion with his pupils about the *single-* and *multi-storey 'ifs'*,⁵⁶ but also material that although translated, both by Hapgood and others, was scattered in various other publications. The imaginary exchange between a director and an actor in the latter's dressing room, for example, discussing the actors' relationship both with the audience and their fellow actors with whom they share the stage, which is now included in Appendix 1 of the Routledge edition (632-633), had only appeared in "a collection of comments on a variety of aspects of an actor's art and life" edited and translated by Elizabeth Hapgood and published under the title *Stanislavski's Legacy* by Methuen Drama (iii). In my view, the most important amongst these new additions are the extracts from the original preface to the Russian edition of *An Actor Prepares*⁵⁷ as it is there that Stanislavsky introduces his work, both written and otherwise, and sets the tone for the way he wishes those studying it to approach it: he welcomes both scientific and non-scientific criticism as it will "clarify many misunderstandings and gaps" in the actors' technique and "reveal and explain the deficiencies" of his own work (*An Actor's Work: A Student's Diary* xxiv); he underlines that it is not only the needs of "the actor's invisible, creative mind but also [those of] his visible, palpable body" that his proposed technique aims to address and clarifies that the conclusions he has drawn came from his own experiences, work, and observations (ibid.

⁵⁶ In her article "Stanislavsky: Unabridged and Uncensored", Sharon Carnicke talks about the particular passage that Hapgood left out in her translation and explains its importance to the understanding not only of Stanislavsky's *Magic If* device but also of the "varying roles of actor, director, designer, electrician; in short [of] the collaborative basis of theatrical work" (38-41).

⁵⁷ In *Stanislavski's Legacy*, Hapgood had also included less than a page of this preface translating the passage where Stanislavsky talks about (30)

xxvi); and finally, he cautions against the impatience that characterises all those longing for “a quick return from their reading” reminding them that the practical benefit “they should expect” from the study of “any system, method, or practical advice”, including his own work, cannot but come after they have become so familiar with it that they literally forget about it (ibid. xxv).

The same argument Stanislavsky makes about the time it takes for the study of any approach to acting to produce practical results applies also to the main challenge the new translations of his writings are faced with, that is to put an end to the 50-year reign of Hapgood’s translations as the primary written source of information on his life and work. Needless to say that such a change cannot take place overnight and until Hapgood’s work is rendered obsolete, the two translations will have to coexist. The timing of the writing of the thesis at hand falls into this inevitable period of coexistence. Considering this, it was decided to use both translations when presenting Stanislavsky’s System in the chapters to follow and to provide further information for every fragment of his work quoted from Hapgood’s translation that showed significant change in Benedetti’s new translations. In doing so, we will have the opportunity not only to highlight some of the points where Hapgood’s work went astray but also to appraise Benedetti’s work from the perspective of the current research.

I.3. Approaching Stanislavsky: Issues of Methodology

One of the three questions Stanislavsky proposed that all actors wishing to enrol in the Moscow Art Theatre's First Studio should be asked to answer as part of their auditioning process was: "What [do they] understand by the word 'art'" (Magarshack, *Stanislavsky On the Art* 114).⁵⁸ The purpose of posing such an admittedly overwhelming question to the young candidates was not only to find out how they positioned themselves regarding art but also to give Stanislavsky the opportunity to talk to them about his own understanding of the art of theatre. His work *An Actor Prepares* begins with a similar lecture. Having asked his student-actors to present a scene of their choice in order to "acquaint him with their talents" (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 107), the director Tortsov, i.e. Stanislavsky's literary persona, comments on their performances noting that only in one or two instances "you who were playing, and we who were watching, gave ourselves up completely to what was happening on the stage. Such successful moments ... we can recognise as belonging to *the art of experiencing*" [my emphasis] (*An Actor Prepares*, 12).⁵⁹

According to Carnicke, Stanislavsky used the notion of *experiencing* in two different contexts. In the first, he employed the term so as "to set his own brand of theatre apart from others" (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 107). In a work left unfinished,⁶⁰ Stanislavsky

⁵⁸ The other two questions were a) "why does a man who takes up any artistic profession ... choose this particular branch of art, and what is the idea he wants to, and indeed has to, contribute to that particular branch of art?" and b) "Is the man who goes on the stage inspired by so unquenchable a love of art that it can help him overcome all the obstacles he is bound to meet in the course of his theatrical career?" (Magarshack, *Stanislavsky On the Art* 114-115)

⁵⁹ The italicised fragment is not to be found in Elizabeth Hapgood's translation. Hapgood, as was mentioned earlier, translated Stanislavsky's *perezhivanie* in a variety of different ways. In the particular case, her choice was to render it as *living a part*. According to Sharon Carnicke, however, the fragment in question ought to have been translated as the *art of experiencing* (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 110). The fragment will remain italicised throughout this thesis in order for Stanislavsky's concept to remain clear.

⁶⁰ As early as 1909 Stanislavsky started working on an essay where he would explain the differences between what he understood to be three types of theatre. According to Carnicke, "when offered the opportunity to publish in the United States he immediately returned to this early project, and produced a draft that is far

distinguishes the *theatre of experiencing* or of *emotional identification*, for which he stands, from the *theatre of craft* and the *theatre of representing*.⁶¹ Examining them comparatively, he summarises:

“Whereas the art of emotional identification implies getting the feel of the role every time, at every performance, and the art of representing a role means living through it just once at home in order to comprehend it and make up a form for it, expressive of its essence, craft forgets about ‘living the part’ and strives to work out, once and for all, ready forms to express the motions and scenic interpretations for all the roles and trends there are. In other words, in the art of emotional identification and in the art of representing a role, the process of living the feelings involved is unavoidable, whereas in craft there is no need to do so, and if it does happen it is only by accident” (“On Various Trends” 133-134).

Stanislavsky dismisses the *theatre of craft* not only due to its treatment of “each stage creation” as a caricature rather than having “its own life, its story and its nature with its organic elements of body and soul” (ibid. 167) but also because its lifeless portrayals are created by nothing more than “a large assortment of picturesque effects [and] established clichés [such as] operatic gestures [and] mincing steps” that lead to “a sort of artificial imitation of the periphery of physical feelings” (*An Actor Prepares*, 24-26). Similarly, the *art of representation*, although more respectable as it prescribes at least a

more theoretical than either his memoirs or his later acting manuals. He abandoned this draft when his Boston publisher requested something more commercially attractive” (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 112). However, as he admitted to his close friend Lyubov Gurevich in several letters dated between 1912 and 1930, he never ceased to think about returning to his abandoned project. His essay was finally put together using “unfinished chapters and notes of 1909 and 1922” (ibid. 204) and published in a collection of articles compiled by Oksana Korneva and entitled *Konstantin Stanislavsky: Selected Works*.

⁶¹ The translation of all three labels Stanislavsky used for the different types of theatre have been subjected to criticism. In her article “Central Conceptions in Stanislavski’s System”, Burnet M. Hobgood argues that Stanislavsky’s *iskusstvo predstavlenia* ought to have been translated as “the art of presentational performance” (148) and not as “the art of representation”, which was Elizabeth Hapgood’s choice (Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares*, 22) or as “the art of representing” which was Olga Shartze’s choice (Stanislavski, *Stanislavsky: Selected Works* 133). Jean Benedetti and Sharon Carnicke, on the other hand, believe that “‘representation’ best reflects usage in 19th century acting debates known to Stanislavsky” (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus*, 204). According to Hobgood, Hapgood rightfully rendered *remesslo* as “mechanical acting”. Aleksander Koiransky, however, translates the particular term as “trade” or “industry” (Senelick, “New Information” 128). As far as the Russian *perezhivannia* is concerned, Hobgood (“Central Conceptions” 149), Carnicke and Benedetti (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 204) agree that, contrary to Schartze’s *emotional identification* and to Hapgood’s galore of renderings described earlier, its proper translation is *experiencing*.

minimum of emotional involvement on the actor's part, is also rejected by Stanislavsky as its aim is to produce not "emotion itself but its visual results" and to create "merely a verisimilitude of scenic emotion and a trust in it" instead of a "genuine truth and a belief in it" ("On Various Trends" 156-159). For Stanislavsky, only the *art of experiencing* which is based on the "actor's truthful, sincere feeling and genuine passion" should be considered as the true theatrical art form (ibid. 166). The description of the principles governing his *theatre of experiencing* constitutes the second context within which Stanislavsky uses the notion of *experiencing*.

Since "one cannot play or represent feelings" ("The Art of the Actor" 187), the actor, argues Stanislavsky, has no choice but to "live the part, experience its feelings every time, at every repeated performance" ("On Various Trends" 168). According to his reasoning, this emotional sincerity will not only make actors "most convincing", – as Aristotle, too, believed "those who feel emotion" to be (Butcher 63), – but will also provide them with a unique criterion by which they can appraise their own performance.⁶² In his work *On the Technique of Acting*, Michael Chekhov described the manifestation of *experiencing* on the stage as the moment when the actor "has given to his image his flesh and blood, his ability to move and speak, to feel, to wish, and now the image disappears from the mind's eye and exists within him and acts upon his means of expression from inside him" (155).⁶³ What needs to be noticed, however, is that despite leading to such an ecstatic state, *experiencing*, – understood here as *emotional identification*, – does not rely

⁶² More information on the connection between Aristotle and Stanislavsky can be found in Natalie Crohn-Schmitt's work *Actors and Onlookers: Theatre and Twentieth Century Views on Nature* (93-110). Jonathan Pitches offers a critique on Crohn-Schmitt in his work *Science and the Stanislavsky Tradition of Acting* (14-36).

⁶³ Stanislavsky has his imaginary student, Kostya, describe how he felt during his portrayal of the character of the Critic in a similar manner: "I was truly happy. But my state was not of ordinary satisfaction. It was a joy which stemmed directly from creative, artistic achievement ... The reason, I concluded, was that while I was acting I felt exceptionally pleased as I followed my own transformation" (*Building a Character*, 20-21). In his "Notes to the Members of the Intimate Theatre", August Strindberg also talked about the "trance" actors put themselves into as a state similar to "sleepwalking" noting that he had observed "how much it pains an actor" to be "awakened from his trance" by the director during the rehearsal of a scene and how much time it takes "for him to fall back to sleep and regain the proper tone and feeling" (157).

on emotions produced *ad loc* during the performance, (which Stanislavsky considers extremely dangerous,⁶⁴) but to a selection of the actor's past emotional experiences, woven together, appropriated to the character's emotional journey, and re-lived during the rehearsals and the performance.⁶⁵ As Stanislavsky explains, "On the stage an actor rarely experiences a primary feeling. Far more often, almost always in fact, he experiences repeated feelings he has known earlier in life and revived from memory" ("On Various Trends" 169).⁶⁶

As well as aiming to bring the actor emotionally closer to the dramatic character, the *art of experiencing* sets two more goals for Stanislavsky's actors. The first goal is revealed when Tortsov corrects Shustov, one of Stanislavsky's imaginary pupils, for summarising the study of the art of theatre by asserting that actors "must assimilate a psychological technique of living a part" (Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares* 15). Tortsov declares that this wouldn't be enough: "Our aim is ... also to express it in a beautiful, artistic form" (ibid. 15). The second goal is uncovered when the fictional director, discussing the importance of communication on the stage, remarks that the actors of the *theatre of experiencing* need to keep in mind that it is also the audience that "takes silent

⁶⁴ To illustrate the unpredictable effect "feeling [one has] never experienced at all in real life" can have when occurring for the first time on the stage, Stanislavsky explains to one of his imaginary pupils: "Suppose you are playing the scene in the last act of *Hamlet* where you throw yourself with your sword on your friend Paul here, who enacts the role of the king, and suddenly you are overwhelmed for the first time in your life with a lust for blood. Even though your sword is only a dull property weapon, so that it cannot draw blood, it might precipitate a terrible fight and cause the curtain to be rung down" (*An Actor Prepares* 175).

⁶⁵ Although Manfred Pfister is opposed to "the tendency to discuss dramatic figures as if they were people or characters from real life" (161), for Stanislavsky "a role is a living, *organic creation* modeled on man and not a lifeless, bedraggled theatrical cliché" ("On Various Trends" 167).

⁶⁶ To support his argument, Stanislavsky quotes the great Italian actor Tommaso Salvini in saying "For material [an actor] must use his own live feelings engendered by his role, his remembrance of visual, sound and other images that had stirred him earlier, the emotions, joys, sorrows, and different states of mind he had experienced, his ideas, knowledge, facts and events. In short a remembrance of consciously experienced feelings, sensations, states of mind, moods and so on, familiar to the personage he portrays" ("On Various Trends" 168). Although the particular passage is not to be found in Salvini's autobiography, the Italian actor does admit in it that he felt the need "of studying ... men, and things, vice and virtue, love and hate, humility and haughtiness, gentleness and lavishness, long suffering and vengeance – in short, all the passions for good and evil which have root in human nature" in order "to become capable of identifying [him]self with one or another personage to such an extent as to lead the audience into the illusion that the real personage, and not a copy, is before them" (70-71).

part in [the actors'] communication, sees, recognises, understands and is infected with their experiencing" (qtd. in Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 111).⁶⁷ Considering Tortsov's latter two comments, it becomes evident that the *art of experiencing* rests not only upon the actor's *emotional identification* with the dramatic character but also upon the *artistic expression* and the *infectiousness* of this coalescence; these are the three pillars of Stanislavsky's *theatre of experiencing*. In addition to constituting the core of the System, these three elements also reveal one of the two main sources Stanislavsky drew his inspiration from when searching for the foundations for his *theatre of experiencing*: Lev Tolstoy's definition of art.⁶⁸ According to Tolstoy,

"[t]o call up in oneself a feeling once experienced and, having called it up, to convey it by means of movements, lines, colours, sounds, images expressed in words, so that others experience the same feeling – in this consists the activity of art. Art is that human activity which consists in one man's consciously conveying to others, by certain external signs, the feelings he has experienced, and in others being infected by those feelings and also experiencing them" (39-40).⁶⁹

⁶⁷ I chose to use Sharon Carnicke's translation instead of Elizabeth Hapgood's because the latter's rendering of the passage cited reads: "He [the spectator] has a silent part in their [the actors'] exchange of feelings, and is excited by their experiences" (Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares* 197). By replacing *infection* with *excitement* Hapgood dissociates in effect Stanislavsky from Tolstoy's terminology despite the fact that, as Carnicke points out, "both men used the same term for *experiencing* in Russian", namely *perezhil* (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 110).

⁶⁸ Whereas R. I .G. Hughes recognises only Tolstoy as Stanislavsky's source of inspiration, Carnicke (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 203) and Hobgood ("Central Conceptions" 151) argue that one should not overlook the influence Leopold Antonovich Sulerzhitsky, Stanislavsky's close friend to whom he dedicates a whole chapter in his autobiographical work *My Life in Art*, had on him. Furthermore, it should also be noted that, as Sharon Carnicke points out, Stanislavsky used Tolstoy's ideas not only for artistic reasons but also in order "to support the central goal of the Moscow Art Theatre – respect for theatrical art – through an implied tautology. If art infects its audiences with the artist's experiencing, and if acting does the same, then acting must be a legitimate art. Conversely, acting that most consistently embodies experiencing must be the most successful form of theatrical art" (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 112).

⁶⁹ In his work *Aesthetics*, the French philosopher Eugène Véron defined art as "the manifestation of emotion, obtaining external interpretation, now by expressive arrangements of line, form or colour, now by a series of gestures, sounds, or words governed by a particular rhythmical cadence" (89). Although Tolstoy uses nearly verbatim the middle part of Véron's "practical definition" (37), he chooses to reject it arguing that *expression* doesn't necessarily lead to *infection*, which he considers an imperative for true art. Tolstoy and Véron disagree also on the subject of language. As C. J. Ducasse argues, "for Tolstoi language is essentially a means of communication. Veron, on the other hand, considers primarily not what language is socially good for, nor what needs have shaped its evolution, but rather what language is as a matter of direct introspective observation. And he finds that language is essentially *expression* either of meaning or of feeling – the latter constituting what we call art" (182).

To illustrate his understanding of art's purpose, Tolstoy tells the tale of a young boy describing in detail his encounter with a wolf. Regardless of whether the boy has manufactured the story or whether he has really confronted a wolf, Tolstoy argues, if during his narration "the boy relives the feeling he experienced [and] infects his listeners ... call[ing] up in [them] the same feeling", then "this is art" (ibid. 39). Although, as it will be seen in the sections to follow, Stanislavsky did not fully endorse Tolstoy's dogmatism as to the effect a work of art ought to have on its recipients, one can clearly recognise the similarities between the Russian novelist's and the Russian director's reasoning.

The second source of inspiration for Stanislavsky was Pushkin's mandate to playwrights: "The truth concerning the passions, verisimilitude in the feelings experienced in the given circumstances, that is what our intelligence demands of a dramatist" (qtd. in Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 15).⁷⁰ Stanislavsky used Pushkin's aphorism in order to subdivide the actors' creative process, which aimed to lead to their *emotional identification* with the dramatic characters, into three periods: the preparatory "period of study" (Stanislavski, *Creating a Role*, 3), during which the performers are to become acquainted with the *given circumstances* of the play and its characters, the "period of emotional experience" (ibid. 44), which aims at nurturing in the actors the *verisimilitude of emotions*, and finally the "period of physical embodiment" (ibid. 85), during which the actors bring together the work done on the characters' inner state with that done on their external presentation. Stanislavsky discusses these three periods of study in *Creating a Role*.

The triple way in which Stanislavsky understands the notion of *experiencing*, – namely as *emotional identification*, as *artistic expression*, and as *infectiousness*, – will

⁷⁰ In Hapgood's translation Pushkin's aphorism reads: "Sincerity of emotions, feelings that seem true in given circumstances" (Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares* 50). I preferred to use Benedetti's translation, which coincides with the translations brought forward by Olga Shartze (Stanislavsky, "On Various Trends" 158) and Christine Edwards (18), for no other reason than to substitute the amplified *feelings that seem true* with the more condensed *verisimilitude*.

serve as the mainstay of our attempt to infuse his System into the *corpus* of translation. With the exception of the first pillar of Stanislavsky's System, which will be discussed in two chapters, to each of the remaining two principles of the *art of experiencing* a separate chapter will be devoted. The reason for breaking up the analysis of Stanislavsky's understanding of *experiencing* as *emotional identification* into two parts is to isolate the actors' purely cognitive work on the play and its characters, which takes up the first half of *the period of study*, from their emotional approach to the playwright's creation, to which the second half of *the period of study* and the first half of *the period of emotional experience* is devoted. As far as the second half of the *period of emotional experience* and the final *period of physical embodiment* are concerned, in which Stanislavsky addresses issues related to the external presentation of the actors' portrayals, these will be examined within the framework of our analysis of the second pillar of the System, in other words his understanding of *experiencing* as *artistic expression*.

Chapter II

Introducing and Contextualising Drama Translation

Having introduced Stanislavsky and his work in the previous chapter, we will now proceed to introduce the field of drama translation by examining the two main themes that seem to run through, if not say dominate, its discourse.

The first theme revolves around the playtext and deals with its role and function in the theatre, the challenges its complex nature presents translators with and the approaches they have brought forward to overcoming these challenges.

The second theme revolves around the translators themselves as creators of the target language version of the playtext. The main issues raised by this theme concern the translators' approaches to the writing and preparation of translations of plays, their collaboration with the members of the theatrical company entrusted with the staging of the play as well as their experiences with the dramatic work's fictional world and characters.

The aim of exploring these two themes is to contextualise theatre translation and thereby to set the general framework within which the usefulness and applicability of Stanislavsky's System to the process of translating dramatic texts will be evaluated in the chapters to follow.

II.1 The text

Already in one of the earliest accounts discussing issues related specifically to the translation of dramatic texts, drama translation scholar and practitioner Susan Bassnett-McGuire pointed out that

“the translator of theatre texts faces a problem unlike that involved in any other type of translation process. The principal difficulties resides in the nature of the text itself for whilst interlingual translation involves the transfer of a given text from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL), all kinds of factors other than linguistic are involved in the case of theatre texts” (“Ways Through the Labyrinth” 87).

According to Bassnett, what causes the translation of a playwright’s work to involve *all kinds of other than linguistic factors* is that in addition to its connection to the literary system, the dramatic text enjoys a “dialectical relationship” with its performance (“Translating for the Theatre” 99). In order to gain insight into the nature of the interaction between the linguistic and other components of the spectacle and to acquire a deeper understanding of the way this interaction is likely to influence a translator’s work, drama translation scholars and practitioners turned for answers to the field of theatre semiotics, which sought to study and analyse in a systematic manner the structures and sign systems that make up the dramatic representation.

There are three main bodies of work carried out in the field of theatre semiotics that have been systematically used by drama translators as a basis for the discussion regarding the complex nature of the playtext. The first one, which signalled also the birth of theatre semiotics in the late 1930s and early 1940s, is the pioneering work of the theatre semioticians of the Prague Linguistic Circle that “laid the foundations for what is probably the richest corpus of theatrical and dramatic theory produced in modern times” (Elam, 5). According to Elam (4), Veltruský (141), Deák (84), Martin (18), and Carlson (408) it was

the Czech semiotician Otakar Zich who made the first step towards a scientific analysis of the theatre and drama with the publication of his highly influential work *The Aesthetics of the Art and Drama* in 1931. Rejecting the static understanding of the notion of structure in the case of the theatre promoted by Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* theory, which viewed the dramatic art not as unitary but rather as "a collective manifestation of music, poetry, architecture, histrionics, and so on [i.e.] as the sum of the other arts" (Honzl 276), Zich maintained that the "specific character of the theatrical unit" is to be understood as "the combination of two simultaneous, inseparable but heterogeneous components, that is, visual components (optical) and audible components (acoustic)" (ibid. 277). According to his understanding, the interaction between the various elements participating in the dramatic art meant that one could not grant "automatic dominance to any one of the components" involved in the dramatic representation; particularly to the written text, which has traditionally enjoyed a prominent place "in the system of systems making up the total dramatic experience" (Elam 4).

Using Charlie Chaplin's mimes as his case study, another prominent member of the Prague School, Jan Mukařovský, reaffirmed Zich's notion of interrelationship that exists between the various sign systems in the theatre and promoted their subordination to a unified whole arguing that a theatrical performance is not to be understood as a single sign but rather as "a network of semiotic units belonging to different cooperative systems" and creating a "macro-sign [whose] meaning is constituted by its total effect" (ibid. 7).

Drawing on folk theatre, ethnologist Petr Bogatyrev maintained that once on a theatrical stage all objects and bodies automatically acquire "special features, qualities and attributes" that they do not enjoy in their everyday function (ibid. 7). According to his understanding, however, a theatrical sign is to be understood as the "sign of a sign and not [as] the sign of a material thing" (ibid. 10). As Elam explains, it may be, for example, that

“in addition to the denoted class ‘armour’ a martial costume comes to signify for a particular audience ‘valour’ or ‘manliness’, or a bourgeois domestic interior ‘wealth’, ‘ostentation’, ‘bad taste’ etc” (ibid. 10). For Bogatyrev, the transformability and polysemy of the theatrical sign applies also to the case of linguistic component in the dramatic representation: in addition to the actor’s gestures and clothes or the setting on the stage, the lights etc, language, through “word order, syntax, the distribution of pauses, and other verbal means”, adds also to the audience’s understanding of a character’s cultural and social status – “mistakes”, for example, are used in the “language for fools; dialects to suggest rustic/peasant folk; prose for common people and verse for nobility” (Martin 19). “Linguistic expression in theatre”, Bogatyrev maintained, “is a structure of signs constituted not only as discourse signs, but also as other signs” (qtd. in Bassnett, *Translation Studies* 121).

In a manner similar to Bogatyrev, avant-garde stage director Jindřich Honzl underlined the transformability of the theatrical sign maintaining that there are no “fixed representational relations” to be found in a dramatic representation: in the same manner that puppets or a machine can represent the *dramatis personae* of a play, language or mime can be used to indicate, for example, space on the stage (Elam 13).

Analysing the theatrical structure from the dramatic text’s point of view in his essay “Dramatic Text as a Component of Theatre”, Jiří Veltruský argued that “the unending quarrel about the nature of drama, whether it is a literary genre or a theatrical piece, is perfectly futile [as] one does not exclude the other” (95). According to his understanding, the main difference between theatre and drama is that theatre “uses language as one of its materials, [whereas for] drama language is the only material” (qtd. in Bassnett, “Still Trapped in the Labyrinth” 98). Echoing Zich, Veltruský also maintained that there are two main sign systems to be found in the theatre: the linguistic and the extra linguistic, which

are characterised by an “intense and reciprocal” relationship (qtd. in Bassnett, *Translation Studies* 121). However, despite his belief that the text can eliminate all other theatrical components, such as music, scenic sets etc, unless these were to “re-enter the theatrical structure through the intermediary of the actor” (114-115), Veltruský also warned that the transformability of the sign is not to be misinterpreted as “as conflation of different signs systems” (Carlson 410). “Words cannot be fully translated into gestures, pictures, music, the meaning of a picture cannot be fully conveyed by language”, Veltruský maintained arguing that theatre needs to be considered as “a laboratory of ‘contrastive semiotics’”(ibid. 410).

According to Elam, the work of the Prague School scholars on the semiotics of theatre stagnated for nearly two decades until the 1960s when Tadeusz Kowzan “took up the structuralist heritage” (ibid. 18). Kowzan’s work constitutes the second source on theatre semiotics that translators have used to gain insight into the nature of the written text and its role and function in the theatre. In his work “The Sign in the Theatre: An Introduction to the Semiology of the Art of the Spectacle”, Kowzan sought to classify and describe in a more detailed manner the components of the theatrical structure. In a manner similar to Zich, Kowzan distinguished between auditive and visual signs dividing the former into two categories of semiotic systems of expression, namely the “spoken text” and the “inarticulate sounds”, and the latter into three categories, i.e. the “expression of the body”, the “actor’s external appearance” and finally the “appearance of the stage” (72-73).⁷¹ The Polish semiotician went on to further divide these five sign systems into thirteen distinct subsections and to group them together into four groups, namely those existing in time, those existing in space and time, those related to the actors and finally those functioning outside them. Kowzan’s detailed classification revealed the complexity of the

⁷¹ According to František Deák, the only exception to be found between the structuralist approach of the Prague School semioticians and Kowzan’s typology is that the latter did “not include the audience as a component” of the theatrical structure (86).

interrelationship between the various sign systems, underlined their non-hierarchical nature and reaffirmed the Prague semioticians' suggestion that the linguistic system isn't but one among the many constituent components that comprise a theatrical performance. Exploring further the nature of the playtext, Kowzan identified in his work "From Written Text to Performance – From Performance to Written Text" three distinct types of relationship that are likely to exist between the written and the performed. According to his classification, in the first type the written text exists prior to the performance and requires "intonations and a minimum of facial expression" in order to be performed (1). In the second type one finds texts that consist of stage directions and entail neither dialogues nor monologues, such as in the case of "dumb shows (scenarios for ballets and mimes)" (ibid. 2). In this case the performance consists of the execution of these general guidelines. In the third type of relationship the performance precedes the text which comes into being *a posteriori* as the product of improvisations performed on the stage on a "*scenario*, or pre-arranged synopsis" (Aaltonen, *Time-Sharing* 19). To that category one could assign, for example, the works of the Italian *commedia dell' arte*.

Kowzan's work on the relationship between the written text and its performance led in the 1970s a group of Italian semioticians, collectively known as the Rizzoli group, to seek to establish a grammar of performance. Their work and the suggestions brought forward by two French semioticians, Anne Ubersfeld and Patrice Pavis, constitute the third main source on theatre semiotics that translators have used in order to acquire a deeper understanding of the nature of the playtext. Susan Bassnett-McGuire summarised the results of the work done by the Italian semioticians of the Rizzoli group arguing that whereas some, such as Marcelo Pagnini, favoured "a model following the notion of deep structure, where the performance text could be extracted from the written by analysing the implicit in the utterances of the characters of the play" ("Ways Through the Labyrinth" 89),

others, such as Paola Gulli Pugliati, perceived the text as “a network of latent theatrical signs that are only realised in performance” (Bassnett-McGuire, “An Introduction to Theatre Semiotics” 50). A third approach came from Franco Ruffini who promoted the idea that “the staging of a written text results in the merging of the two texts, with the performance text being submerged into the script of the play” (Bassnett-McGuire, “Ways Through the Labyrinth” 89).

Anne Ubersfeld, however, did not share the Rizzoli group’s understanding of the playtext as a blueprint for an eventual performance and advanced the thesis that written text and performance need to be understood as indissolubly linked. Although she agreed with the perception of the linguistic system as merely one of the interrelated systems that are likely to comprise a theatrical performance, Ubersfeld underlined in her work *Lire le Théâtre* the interdependence of performance and written text maintaining that “the playtext is *troué*, it is full of gaps that can only be realised in performance” (qtd. in Bassnett, “Still Trapped in the Labyrinth” 91). Furthermore, she argues, it was precisely the understanding of the performance as a ‘translation’ of the written text that led historically not only to the prioritisation of the linguistic over the other sign systems that take part in a performance but also to the false impression that “the form and content of the expression will remain identical when transferred from a system of text-signs to a system of performance signs” (qtd. in Bassnett, *Translation Studies* 120). In a similar manner to Ubersfeld, Patrice Pavis also maintained that regardless of whether the playtext is perceived as a network of *latent* signs or the *deep structure* of an eventual performance, any artificial distinction between the written text and its performance assigns to the former a special, higher status. In his work *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture* Pavis rejected the understanding of the relationship between text and performance as one of “conversion, translation or reduction”

maintaining that since “text and performance are perceived at the time and in the same place [it] is impossible to declare that the one precedes the other” (29).

The approaches brought forward by the theatre semioticians had a profound impact on the field of drama translation studies. By revealing the building blocks of the *dialectical relationship* the playtext enjoys with its performance, the semioticians’ work shed light on the way “the naked words of the printed stage text provide a basis for action and co-ordination with the immediate environment of the dramatic world in which they are to be embedded” (Snell-Hornby 109). At the same time it also highlighted the need for translators to have the capacity “to work in several dimensions at once” incorporating not only “linguistic signifiers” into their work but also “visual, gestural [and] aural” (Hale 2). Building particularly on Kowzan’s work, drama translation scholar Mary Snell-Hornby grouped the features embedded in the playtext that connect it to its performance and that need to be taken into consideration by the drama translator into three categories:

- a. Paralinguistic features, which concern “vocal elements such as intonation, pitch, rhythm, tempo, resonance, loudness and voice timbre leading to expressions of emotion such as shouting, sighing or laughter”.
- b. Kinesic features, which are related to “body movements, postures and gestures and include smiling, winking, shrugging or waving”.
- c. Proxemic features, which involve “the relationship of a figure to the stage environment and describe the movement within that environment and its varying distance or physical closeness to the other characters of the stage” (109).

The semioticians' invaluable insight into the multisemiotic and transformable nature of the playtext, however, combined with their perception of the written text not as a pre-eminent system of expression in the theatre but merely as one of the constituent elements among the variety of others that comprise the dramatic spectacle, presented drama translation scholars and practitioners with a fundamental question: are translators to attempt translating "the text as a purely literary text, or to try to translate it in its function as one element in another, more complex system" (Bassnett, *Translation Studies* 120)?⁷² What may in essence not seem as a new dilemma⁷³ sparked a heated debate among drama translators that continues to this day with regard to whether it ought to be the textual or the performance dimension of the playtext that they need to give priority to when transferring a playwright's work from one language into another.

One of the first drama translation scholars to explore this issue and take sides was Susan Bassnett-McGuire. Embracing Ubersfeld's approach, Bassnett-McGuire maintained during the first phase of her work on drama translation in the early 1980s that with the exception of "texts written as plays but designated strictly literary (e.g. the 'plays' of Byron and Shelley, where performance is expressly discounted by the authors)", it is impossible to separate text from performance ("Ways Through the Labyrinth" 87).⁷⁴ This consequently means, she continued, that the translation of dramatic text needs to involve "not only a sequence of linguistic transfers from SL to TL on the level of discourse signification, but

⁷² Admittedly not all translators were willing to accept the premises of such dilemma. In his article "On Translating Plays", for example, Michael Meyer expressed his surprise "that anyone should suppose that any such duality exists" maintaining that a translation should always bear the same characteristics as its source text (50). In a similar manner Peter Newmark argued that "whilst a ... play may be translated for the reading public's enjoyment and for scholarly study as well as for performance on stage ... there should be no difference between an acting and a reading version" (*A Textbook* 173).

⁷³ According to Susan Bassnett two principal modes of translating theatre texts have existed side by side already since the seventeenth and eighteenth century: on the one hand there were translations for performance that "have tended away from notions of 'fidelity' to the source text" while on the other there were "'poetic' translations" of theatre texts that animated "a whole range of debates on the nature of fidelity to verse form" ("Translating for the Theatre" 106).

⁷⁴ In her work "Translation Science and Drama Translation", Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt brought forward a similar suggestion arguing that "drama ... lives in its theatre performance, [in] the total experience expressed in oral and non-verbal language and appreciated by all physical senses as well as the intellect and emotions" (5).

also a transfer of the function of the linguistic utterance in relation to the other component signs of theatre discourse” (*Translation Studies* 124). To illustrate her point, Bassnett draws attention to two “distinguishable features that make [the text] performable, beyond the stage directions themselves” (ibid. 122). The first one is the “set of paralinguistic systems” contained in the literary text (ibid. 130). Building on Zich and Kowzan’s understanding of the dramatic spectacle as a network of visual and auditive signs, Bassnett underlined that since the play is written for voices, its dialogue, once performed, will inevitably be “characterised by rhythm, intonation patterns, pitch and loudness” as well as by the actors’ speed of delivery and accents (ibid. 121). The fact that all these *paralinguistic systems* will function as signifiers during the performance means that the translator needs to take them into account when transposing the playwright’s creation from one language into another, she maintained.

The second feature Bassnett-McGuire brought forward concerned a pattern “of intrinsic gestural structuring” contained in a playtext that is distinct not only from the “academic notion of meter and verse form” but also from the stage directions that are likely to be included in the playwright’s work (“The Translator in the Theatre” 39).⁷⁵ According

⁷⁵ In her article “Translating Spatial Poetry: An Examination of Theatre Texts in Performance” published in 1978 Bassnett acknowledges Stanislavsky as her source of inspiration for the notion of *gestural understructure*. Building on his understanding of a play’s or a performance’s tempo-rhythm as the harmonious composition of “a series of small and large conjunctions of varied and variegated rates of speed and measure ... into one large whole” (Stanislavski, *Building a Character* 213), Bassnett argued that such “basic undertextual rhythms” are to be found in “all well-written play[s]” and that the translator must try to translate or adapt them into equivalents in order “for a translation to succeed” (“Translating for the Theatre” 165). She also pointed out that she chose to use the term *undertext* in order to distinguish what she is talking about “from Stanislavski’s *subtext* that actors must seek for beneath the lines” (ibid. 165) [my emphasis]. However, when seven years later she referred again explicitly to Stanislavsky in her article “Ways Through the Labyrinth: Strategies and Methods for Translating Theatre Texts”, Bassnett argued that in her previous account she had raised the question whether a “gestural language ... might exist in a manner similar to the Stanislavskian *subtext* that is decoded by the actor and encoded into gestural form” without explaining what led her to abandon the distinction she initially wanted to maintain (98) [my emphasis]. Furthermore, Bassnett omitted all references to Stanislavsky’s notion of tempo-rhythm in her 1998 article “Still Trapped in the Labyrinth: Further Reflections on Translation and Theatre” maintaining that in that early essay she had “struggled to discuss the Stanislavskian *subtext* in terms of translation” (90) [my emphasis]. Rather than speculate on the reasons that might have caused this terminological inconsistency, I have chosen to maintain Bassnett’s initial distinction between her notion of *undertext* and Stanislavsky’s notion of *subtext* wherever necessary.

to her understanding, this “gestural understructure”, which she describes as “the rhythms contained within the language that determine patterns of physical gesture of the actor”, needs also to be taken into account by the translator and find its way to the target language version of the text (*Translation Studies* 123).⁷⁶ The translator “who ignores all systems outside the purely literary is running serious risks” (ibid. 131), Bassnett-McGuire concluded emphasising that “the necessity for a translation to be performable is a vital criterion ... that translators often overlook in their frantic attempts to be ‘faithful to the original’” (“The Translator in the Theatre” 39).⁷⁷

During the second stage of her work on drama translation in the mid - late 1980s and early 1990s, however, Bassnett-McGuire changed drastically her position towards both the notion of the *gestural understructure* as well as that of the playtext’s *performability*. As far as the former is concerned, she rejected her earlier theory of the translator decoding a gestural pattern from the source text and encoding it in the text’s target language version as “a loose and woolly concept” (“Ways Through the Labyrinth” 98). In her work she lists two main reasons that led her to change her mind. The first one is that she saw the notion of the *gestural understructure* as “implicitly linked” to the theatre of psychological realism (“Translating for the Theatre” 111). Being a concept attached to “a particular time in Western theatre history” (ibid. 111), the notion of a *gestic undertext* cannot be of use to the case of “a post-modernist theatre, or a non-European theatre or indeed any form of theatre

⁷⁶ Robert W. Corrigan is another drama translation scholar and practitioner who advocated the need for the translator to take “the whole gesture of the scene” into account when working on the transfer of a playtext between languages (101). Clearly influenced by theatre critic R.P. Blackmur who saw language as gesture, Corrigan maintained that the translator must at all times “be conscious of the gestures of the voice that speaks – the rhythm, the cadence, the interval” (ibid. 101).

⁷⁷ In agreement with Bassnett, Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt also argued that “the meaning of a play can be distorted and misinterpreted if the translator fails to appropriately transpose the whole network of symbolic signs into the target culture: visual, acoustic as well as linguistic” (“Translation Science” 8).

that is not based on” the particular dramatic form, Bassnett maintained (“Still Trapped in the Labyrinth” 107).⁷⁸

The second reason that Bassnett brings forward is that gesture and body language are culture bound. Drawing on contemporary work done in the field of theatre anthropology, Bassnett maintained that gestic responses to a written text are “affected by a variety of factors, including theatre convention, narrative convention, gender, age behavioural patterns etc.” (“Translating for the Theatre” 110). The fact that “physical expressivity is not universal [but] varies from culture to culture” (“Still Trapped in the Labyrinth” 107), she points out, means that it would inevitably be also perceived in a different manner across cultural boundaries making it impossible for the translator who does not “have experience of gestic readings and training as a performer or director” in both the source and the target theatrical system to transfer the playtext’s “secret [gestic] signs” between their respective linguistic systems (ibid. 92).

For Bassnett, these two reasons render the notion of decoding a “concealed gestic text” not only an impossible, almost “super-human” task for drama translators but also one that would be of limited usefulness to them (“Translating for the Theatre” 100). Considering this, she continues, it would be preferable if drama translators were to stop aspiring to unearth “deep structures and coded subtext” and engaged instead specifically with “the linguistic units, the speech rhythms, the pauses and silences, the shifts of tone or of register, the problems of intonation patterns: in short, the linguistic and paralinguistic aspects of the written text that are decodable and reencodable” (ibid. 107).

As far as the notion of a playtext’s *performability* is concerned, Bassnett rejected it as “a term that has no credibility, because it is resistant to any form of definition” (“Still

⁷⁸ Despite her claim regarding the benefits of applying the notion of a *gestic undertext* to any form of theatre other than the theatre of psychological realism, Bassnett mentions on two separate occasions (“Translating for the Theatre” 100; “Still Trapped in the Labyrinth” 92) that Brecht’s acting theory is also supportive of the notion of a *gestic text* being encoded in the written text and decoded by the actors, overlooking the relation between the German playwright’s *Gestus* to his own Epic Theatre.

Trapped in the Labyrinth” 95). According to her, there is no sound historical base for arguing that *performability* was ever featured “as an intrinsic element” of the dramatic text (“Translating for the Theatre” 107). Even within the framework of the eighteenth century commercial theatre’s treatment of the written text as an “anything but sacred” component of a theatrical performance that could easily be reshaped by “speedy hack translations”, *performability* could not but be defined in terms of addressing basic, practical necessities, such as “audience expectations, size of company, repertoire of performers, limitations of time and space etc.”, Bassnett maintains (ibid. 106). Moreover, she continues, the notion of *performability* appears to be equally “nonsensical” in cases “where performance conventions of the source culture were ritualised and performing conventions may be only scantily known to us (e.g. the ancient Greek theatre) or where there is no evidence of performance having taken place at all” (ibid. 108).

Turning her attention to the term’s contemporary use, Bassnett argues that the notion of *performability* occurs primarily in three different contexts. Firstly, directors and impresarios have used it as an excuse for asking well-known, and usually monolingual, playwrights, whose established reputation would attract larger audiences to the theatre, to rework and make more *performable* the commissioned, literal translation created by bilingual translators. Secondly, it has been employed by the translators themselves as an “avenue of escape” not only from the “position of economic, aesthetic and intellectual inferiority” they were more than often placed at by theatre policies such as the one described above (ibid. 101), but also from the “master-servant relationship to the written text” that the naturalist and post-naturalist drama demanded (ibid. 105). In the latter case *performability* has served as a justification for the translators’ various linguistic strategies, which ranged from attempts to create “fluent speech rhythms” in the target text that will not impede the performers’ delivery to strategies of cultural adaptation, such as replacing or

omitting passages and avoiding particular dialects that “are deemed to be too closely bound to the SL cultural and linguistic context” (Bassnett-McGuire, “Ways Through the Labyrinth” 90-91). Finally, the notion of *performability* is also to be found in the writings of reviewers and drama critics as a standard against which the translator’s work is to be evaluated.

What this amounts to in practice, argues Bassnett, is that *performability* is constantly being defined on an *ad hoc* basis. Yet even if one were to attempt establishing a set of criteria that would determine what makes a playwright’s work *performable*, such definition could never be universal, she maintains. On the contrary it would “constantly vary” not only “from culture to culture, from period to period and from text type to text type” (Bassnett, “Translating for the Theatre” 102) but also depending on the “changing concepts of performance” in the different national contexts and on the power relationship between the translator and the other agents involved in the staging of the playwright’s work (Bassnett, *Translation Studies* 122). The only case where *performability* could play a role in the work of the drama translator, she argues, is within the context of the co-operative translation, which involves the collaboration between either two native speakers of the source and target language respectively or between someone who knows the source language and the members of the theatrical company who will present the playwright’s work on the stage. In this case, *performability* ceases to be an “implicit, undefined and undefinable quality” (Bassnett-McGuire, “Ways Through the Labyrinth” 101), which is perceived as inherent to the playtext or is assigned to it *a posteriori*, and is understood in terms of dealing “simultaneously [with] the written and oral version of the text” (ibid. 91). With the exception of the particular mode of translating dramatic texts, however, she considers *performability* a “very vexed term” that translators should not be use as a criterion when working for the stage (ibid. 90). As with the case of the *gestic undertext*,

Bassnett believes that translators need to “set aside ‘performability’ ... and to focus more closely on the linguistic structures of the text itself” (ibid. 102).

Arguing against the priority Bassnett wanted translators to give to the text’s linguistic aspect over its performance dimension, semiotician Patrice Pavis advanced the thesis that “a real translation takes place on the level of the *mise en scène* as a whole” (“Problems of Translation” 41). According to Pavis, there are two schools of thought regarding “the relationship between translation and *mise en scène*” (*Theatre at the Crossroads* 144). On the one hand there are drama translators “who seek to guard their autonomy and who often think of their work as publishable as it stands, unattached to any particular *mise en scène*” (ibid. 145). For them the objective of drama translation is not to determine the *mise en scène* and to “encroach on the work of the director [but rather] to allow him the freedom to produce his own concretization” of the play (ibid. 145). On the other hand, argues Pavis, there are translators who subordinate the performance to the text and who perceive translation “as an operation which predetermines the *mise en scène*, or even as a kind of *mise en scène*” (ibid. 146). For them, as director and playwright Antoine Vitez points out, “translation or *mise en scène*: the activity is the same; it is the art of selection among the hierarchy of signs” (qtd. in Pavis, ibid. 146). Pavis dismisses the first of the two approaches on the grounds that although it is important for translators to attempt maintaining the ambiguity of the source text, it is impossible for them to avoid interpreting the playwright’s work. According to his understanding, drama translators stand at “the intersection” of two “situations of enunciation”, formed respectively by the source and the target culture (ibid. 136), with the objective to transfer the text’s “semantic, rhythmic, aural, connotative and other dimensions” from its source to its target situation of perception (ibid. 137). In order to “separate it from its source and origin” and to pull it towards the target culture and language they will inevitably need to “bombard it with questions from

the target language's point of view", Pavis maintains ("Problems of Translation" 26-27). The translation of a playwright's work is therefore not "a mechanism of production of semantic equivalence copied mechanically from the source text" (ibid. 41) but rather a "hermeneutic act" that aims at appropriating a source text by a target text (ibid. 26). As such, argues Pavis, it cannot but interpret the playtext and "pronounce judgment" on it (ibid. 33). "The very fact of leaving aside certain zones of indeterminacy or of not solving the mystery", he concludes, "involves taking up a position with respect to the text, and leads to a certain kind of dramaturgical, theatrical and recipient concretization" (*Theatre at the Crossroads* 146).

In response to the approach brought forward by Pavis, Susan Bassnett argued in her article "Translating for the Theatre: The Case Against Performability" that by favouring the *mise en scène* over the text, Pavis "insists on a hierarchical relationship [that views] a theatre text as an incomplete entity" (101). For Bassnett this consequently means not only that the "unfortunate interlingual translator is ... left with the task of transforming unrealised text A to unrealised text B" but also that Pavis appears to be suggesting that such a task "is somehow of lower status than that of the person who effects the transposition of written text into performance" (ibid. 101). Although she admits that "theatre texts cannot be considered as identical to texts written to be read", Bassnett underlines that "neither can an abstract notion of performance be put before textual considerations" (ibid. 110-111). According to her understanding, the main problems drama translators face are related to the written text and are primarily of linguistic nature – "differences in register involving age, gender, social position etc., deictic units, consistency in monologues and many more" (ibid. 111). For Bassnett, it is these problems that "should take precedence over an abstract, highly individualistic notion of performability" and it is only after they have been solved in a satisfactory manner that the text can be submitted to the actors and their director (ibid.

111). “The written text, *troué* as it may be”, concludes Bassnett-McGuire, “is the raw material on which the translator has to work and it is with the written text, rather than with a hypothetical performance that the translator must begin” (“Ways Through the Labyrinth” 102).

Following a different pathway, drama translation scholar Eva Espasa chose to tackle the notion of *performability* not directly but through one of the terms used as its synonym: the “aesthetically and ideologically loaded” notion of theatricality, also referred to as theatre specificity (Pavis, qtd. in Espasa 49). According to Pavis, the term *theatre* has been associated over time with the “place from which the audience watches an action that is presented”, with the theatrical stage itself as the place where that action takes place, with the building in which a performance is presented, with the dramatic genre, and finally with the repertory and works of a particular author (*Dictionary of the Theatre* 396). Espasa groups this variety of associations into two distinct sets, namely those related to the concept of the text and those related to the concept of performance, and goes on to argue that the same two perspectives that theatre and theatricality can be viewed from could also be used for the analysis of the notion *performability*. To illustrate her point, Espasa turns to the other terms used interchangeably with *performability*. When considered from a textual viewpoint, she argues, *performability* is equated with the notions of “‘speakability’ or ‘breathability’” (50). When viewed from the point of view of the theatrical practice or the *mise en scène*, on the other hand, *performability* is thought to be synonymous to the notions of “playability, or actability” (ibid. 50). Espasa uses the binary textual/theatrical also in order to classify accordingly the translators’ emphasis on the fluency of the translated text and their strategies of cultural adaptation that Bassnett discusses in her own work. According to Espasa, however, the two viewpoints *performability* could be seen from do not refer to two opposing “aesthetic, ideological practices” but rather to two “separate

distribution circuits which condition the translation strategies used” for the rendering of a playwright’s work from one language into another (52). To support her claim that *performability* concerns a way of working rather than a way of thinking, Espasa returns to Pavis and evokes his understanding of the notion of theatricality not as “a quality or an essence inherent in a text or situation, but [as] a pragmatic use of stage tools such that the components of performance enhance one another and break the linearity of text and word” (*Dictionary of the Theatre* 397). Building on Pavis’ reference to the *pragmatic use* of the scenic instrument, Espasa also draws the same two conclusions that Bassnett had reached before her, namely that one “cannot talk about an abstract, universal notion of performability” and that any definition of *performability* would “vary depending on the ideology and style of presentation of the company or the cultural milieu” (52). Contrary to Bassnett, however, Espasa does perceive neither the constantly varying notion of *performability* nor the participation of agents and factors other than the translator in the determination of its nature as “an obstacle to translation” (ibid. 58). On the contrary, she argues, the dynamic nature of *performability* needs to be seen as a specific feature of theatre that implies “a process of negotiating the production of translated playtexts” (ibid. 58). Embracing the dynamism of *performability* means placing “theatre ideology and power negotiation” at its heart and relating to them all “textual and theatrical factors such as speakability and playability”, Espasa concludes (ibid. 58).

According to drama translation scholar and practitioner David Johnston, on the other hand, at the heart of the polarisation between the two competing views on translating for the stage lays “a difference that can be boiled down to product and process (“Securing the Performability” 28). “Philological translation”, argues Johnston, “fixes upon the result, while the theatre translator ... cannot forget the process that has led to this result” (ibid. 28). For Johnston, this is a difference in the “degree and range of involvement in the work

of the theatre translator” (ibid. 28). According to his understanding, the drama translator is to be thought of as the target language representative of the playwright in the rehearsal room. Johnston’s picture of a playwright being present at a play’s rehearsals, however, has little in common with the case of Pirandello, for example, who viewed “actors, translators and illustrators” as intruders between “the dramatic author and his creation in the material being of performance” (qtd. in Bassnett, *Luigi Pirandello in the Theatre* 27), with Beckett and his infamous “dogged determination to retain control over both the translation and staging of his work” (Hale 9) or with Chekhov who would not allow for *The Cherry Orchard* to be translated by foreigners who have “no billiards, no Lopakhins, no students like Trofimov” in their own countries (Hingley 305). According to Johnston, the role of the writer for the stage has undergone a fundamental change over the last decades shifting away from the “authorially-dominated theatre towards a proliferation of different writing processes [which take into] account *both* the collaborative input that comes from rehearsal, *and* the solitary art of writing” (“Securing the Performability” 30-31).⁷⁹ If translators were to assume their role as this new type of playwright, Johnston continues, they will need to “recognise the expectations of interaction and dialogue” that characterises today’s rehearsal-room practice as it is there that dramatic texts are “validated and authenticated as working pieces of theatre” (ibid. 31). Through this prism, any approach to translating theatre texts that shies away from the rehearsal-room not only signifies the abrogation of the “rights [and] duties of authorship” (ibid. 31) but appears also to be “predicated upon a refusal to equate or even to merge the contributions of the translator or of the actors and director with that of the playwright”, he maintains (ibid. 27). Conversely, continues Johnston, by engaging in the intra- and inter-lingual translation and negotiation processes that take place in the rehearsal-room, translators will have the opportunity not only to

⁷⁹ The emphasis added is to be found in the original.

become “fully alive to the potentialities of performance ... that are encoded in [their] own playscript” but also to secure the performability of their work (ibid. 34).⁸⁰ Translating a play at the level of the page may serve a “useful function” but it will not be an “enabling” one and although it is possible “to write a translation that serves the purposes of the page and stage equally well ... the truth is that such cases are few and far between”, Johnston concludes (ibid. 27).

Reviewing the approaches brought forward by the aforementioned scholars, one could argue that each of them appears to have a stronger and a weaker side.⁸¹ There is little doubt, for example, that Susan Bassnett is absolutely right in insisting that translators need to be particularly attentive to the playtext’s linguistic problems. After all, dealing with the linguistic problems of a playwright’s work entails not only answering to the questions raised by its potential transposition from the page to the stage but also, if not to say primarily, solving the complex puzzle of its cultural relocation. In other words, even if one were to set aside the problems of their staging and think of them within the framework of a publication, the translation of Molière’s works into Egyptian, the transfer of Chekhov’s plays into Japanese and the transposition of Shakespeare’s creations into Chinese or Afrikaans, for example, would still present theatre translators with the linguistic problems posed by a variety of culture-specific elements⁸² embedded in the particular playwrights’

⁸⁰ Johnston’s understanding of the notion of *performability* as containing a *potentiality of performance* is shared also by Mary Snell-Hornby, who brings forward a similar suggestion arguing that the performability of a stage text is “closely connected with the possibilities it offers for generating ... vocal elements, gestures and movements within the framework of its interpretability as a system of theatrical signs” (109).

⁸¹ Similar discussions with regard to the polarisation between the two opposing views on translating dramatic texts are also to be found, among many others, in the works of Sirkku Aaltonen (*Time-Sharing on Stage* 41-46), Marta Mateo (21-33) and Mary Snell-Hornby (106-116), whose approaches, however, seem to largely coincide with one of the three approaches presented here.

⁸² Among others culture specific references may concern different aspects of everyday life, such as “education, politics, history, art, institutions, legal systems, units of measurement, place names, foods and drinks, sports and national pastimes” (Antonini 154), as well as “manners, moral standards, rituals, tastes, ideologies, sense of humor, superstitions, religious beliefs etc” (Aaltonen, “Translating Plays” 93) or even “speech acts such as apologies, requests, complaints and so on” (Anderman 74).

works⁸³ that their target recipients are unlikely to recognise and understand.⁸⁴ What appears to be the weak side of Bassnett's reasoning, however, is that it does not seem to consider the process of addressing the linguistic problems of the playtext as related to the process of deciding on its *mise en scène*. Or rather, that it appears to understand the notion of *mise en scène* as related only to the stage performance of the playwright's work and not to its presentation in written form to its recipients. Therein lies arguably also the weak point in the suggestion that the drama translator's work can stay unattached to any particular *mise en scène*. To illustrate how dealing with a linguistic problem may influence the *mise en scène* of the text, regardless whether that text is to be performed or not, let us return to the case of translating culture-specific references.

Discussing the options available to translators with regard to dealing with culture-specific elements, Romy Heylen argues that they can either a) attempt to avoid the acculturation of the source text by adhering to "the cultural codes that inform the source culture", b) opt for a "cultural comprise" by altering "the codes of the receiving culture in such a way that those confronted with the alteration will at the same time recognise the alteration and the code" or finally c) choose to acculturate the original work by adhering "to the codes which inform the receiving culture" (23-24). Despite the fact that not all translation scholars share her conviction that drama translators in particular are also given the option not to acculturate a playwright's work⁸⁵, Heylen is arguably right to maintain that translation, and thereby dealing also with culture-specific elements, is not a "rule-

⁸³ More information about the problems of dealing with the translation of the particular plays between the cultural pairs mentioned can be found respectively in Carol Bardenstein's article "The Role of the Target-system in Theatrical Adaptation: Jalāl's Egyptian-Arabic Adaptation of *Tartuffe*", Erika Fischer Lichte's article "Intercultural Aspects in Post-modern Theatre: a Japanese Version of Chekhov's *Three Sisters*", Jane Lai's article "Shakespeare for the Chinese Stage with Preference to *King Lear*" and finally Alet Kruger's article "The Role of Discourse Markers in an Afrikaans Stage Translation of *The Merchant of Venice*".

⁸⁴ Needless to say, of course, that the translation of plays between languages that are theoretically more closely related, such as the different European languages, or even within the same cultural and/or linguistic environment, e.g. from Ancient to Modern Greek, poses similar problems to drama translators.

⁸⁵ According to Sirkku Aaltonen, "some acculturation always takes place in the translation of foreign drama" as a result either of the translator's or of the director's decisions (*Time-Sharing on Stage* 55).

regulated activity but a decision making process ... whereby the translator actively intervenes and appropriates the foreign text with a particular objective in mind” (ibid. 24). An example of a translator *intervening* and *appropriating* a culture-specific element *with a particular objective in mind* can be found in the following extract from a recorded conversation between translators Ros Schwartz and Nicholas de Lange at a translators’ gathering:

Ros Schwartz: In *Orlanda*, by Jacqueline Harpman, the protagonists are a young man, Lucien, and an older woman, Aline, who always uses the formal *vous*. There is a lot of tension and ambiguity in their relationship. A key moment is when Aline inadvertently switches to *tu*, a signal which Lucien immediately picks up and comments on. In my translation, I have her lean forward and put her hand on his arm, which I feel is an equivalent signal for the English, who tend to avoid physical contact.

Nicholas de Lange: Here, you translated a word into a gesture, which might seem quite bold and almost a betrayal, but in fact is real fidelity” (Lange 12).

Despite the fact that *Orlanda* is not a dramatic work, it is arguably clear not only that the scene between the two protagonists in Harpman’s work is framed within a particular *mise en scène* but also how decisively Schwartz’s choice to translate *a word into a gesture* changes that *mise en scène*. What seems to be equally clear, however, is that even if she had opted for communicating to the work’s recipients the switch from the polite, formal *vous* to the informal *tu* in a different, perhaps more subtle manner, e.g. by italicising or by underlining the fragment in Lucien’s response that indicates his acknowledgement of Aline’s unexpected intimate tone, or if she had chosen not to signal Aline’s change of tone at all, Schwartz would also have made a ‘directorial’ or ‘staging’ decision with regard to the particular scene. In any of the above cases Schwartz would have decided, in other words, how the scene was to be played out on the page. The same, however, appears to hold also for any choice drama translators make with regard to the rendering of the linguistic, the paralinguistic, the kinesic or the proxemic features of the playwright’s work:

through their decisions and by having at their disposal “not just words, but all other elements of performance, physical and aural” (Hale 11) they set up or rather direct anew the written form of the playtext. Considering this, one could accordingly argue that Pavis and Vitez appear to be right in maintaining not only that translators cannot avoid interpreting the original text and creating their own *mise en scène* of it but also that consequently the notions of translation and *mise en scène* refer essentially to the same activity.

Yet even if one were to accept the fact that the translation of a dramatic work “implicitly or explicitly contains the framework for a particular *mise en scène*” which guides its recipients “towards a particular spectrum of interpretations” (ibid. 9), one would also need to keep in mind that, as Zuber-Skerritt rightfully points out, just as “any translation is an interpretation of the original [text], any stage performance is an interpretation of the [translated] text” (“Translation Science” 11). In other words, one would need to take into account that the *mise en scène* of the play does not end at the *mise en scène* of the text. Therein seems to lay also the weak aspect of the suggestion that translators can predetermine the *mise en scène* of the playwright’s work. Although translators do have the power to shape or direct the written form of the playtext, performers have also a proven ability to bend its stage form in accordance with their own objectives.⁸⁶ To put it differently, just because Schwartz has Aline lean forward and put her hands on Lucien’s arms does not mean that if the particular scene were to be performed, its performers or their director would necessarily have also adopted the translator’s choice of physical expression to indicate the female protagonist’s unexpected intimacy. Similarly if

⁸⁶ Needless to say of course that performers enjoy the exact same power over the original text as well. The way, for instance, the music hall star Marie Lloyd managed to baffle the London County Council’s committee that was investigating the smut in the variety theatre in the early 1900’s by singing “three of her most innuendo-laden numbers straight-faced” and then rendering with “filthy suggestiveness” the “chaste Edwardian hit” “Come Into the Garden Maud” by Lord Alfred Tennyson may serve as a characteristic example of how powerless any given text can be in a performer’s hands (O’Grady).

Schwartz had chosen to underline or even to put an exclamation point next to the fragment of the male protagonist's response to Aline that indicates his acknowledgment of her change of tone, it wouldn't necessarily have meant that the actor playing Lucien would have spoken his line louder or in a more intense manner. Considering this, one could accordingly argue that just as it is impossible for any text, original or translated, to avoid offering at least one possible interpretation to its recipients, it seems to be equally impossible to impose on them a single one. It seems therefore that, as Pavis points out,

“... in order to conceptualise the act of theatre translation, we must consult the literary translator *and* the director and actor; we must incorporate their contribution and integrate the act of translation into the much broader translation (that is the *mise en scène*) of a dramatic text” (“Problems of Translation” 25).

What the French scholar is clearly suggesting is that the *mise en scène* of a dramatic work that is to be performed in a language other than the one it was originally written in is to be understood as the resultant of two forces: the one translators exercise on the playwright's work and the one the performers exercise on the translators' work. Seen from that perspective Johnston and Espasa appear to have a point in wanting to place particular emphasis on what constitutes the common centre of these forces, namely the negotiation and collaboration process that takes place during the rehearsals of the play. Although admittedly there are drama translators who consider their work concluded upon the submission of the translated playtext to the members of the theatrical company and are not willing to participate in the play's rehearsals as well as directors who, conversely, are not comfortable with the translators' presence during the rehearsal process past the stage of the table work, as the two scholars rightfully argue, it is during that process that all aspects of the complex nature of the playtext are revealed in their true proportions. It is during the play's rehearsals that the troubling notion of *performability* ceases to be an abstract feature

of the playtext that needs to be preserved and becomes a way of dealing simultaneously with the written and the stage form of the text and that the translator's work is *validated and authenticated as a working piece of theatre*. And as will be seen in the section to follow, the translators' awareness that the original creation that awaits their rendering is neither a text nor a play but rather a text that will become a play, even if they are not to be present during its transformation, is of central importance to their creative process.

II.2 The translator

The second main theme in the discourse on drama translation revolves around the translators themselves and their experiences when working for the stage. There are two primary and two secondary sources one could use to acquire information about the identity of drama translators, the nature of their work, the similarities and differences in their working methodologies as well as the challenges raised by their collaboration with the member of the theatrical company. It is on these four types of sources that we will rely to reconstitute in the chapters to follow the creative process translators go through when working on a playwright's creation.

The first of the primary sources are the writings of the drama translators themselves. Single-authored works, such as Sirkku Aaltonen's *Time-sharing on Stage: Drama Translation in Theatre and Society* and Phyllis Zatlin's *Theatrical Translation and Film Adaptation: A Practitioner's View*, edited books, such as Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt's work *Page to Stage: Theatre as Translation*, Terry Hale and Carole-Anne Upton's *Moving Target: Theatre Translation and Cultural Adaptation* and David Johnston's *Stages of Translation*, published proceedings of conferences on drama translation, such as those of the 2002 conference on *Drama Translation and Theatre Practice* which took place in Salzburg and was organised by Sabine Coelsch-Foisner and Holger Klein, as well as numerous articles and interviews published in translation and theatre journals constitute the mainstay of the information available about a drama translator's work provided by the translators themselves.

The second primary source that can provide one with insight into the challenges translators face when working for the stage is a handful of surveys conducted among drama translators and published during the last thirty years. Susan Bassnett-McGuire brought

forward the first of these surveys in 1981. The 32 questions of the questionnaire she distributed among drama translators were divided into groups and aimed at finding out the translators' views on "the necessity of language skills and specific theatre skills, the solving of particular problems involving playtexts, the notion of untranslatability, the role of the translator, the 'spirit of the original', and, finally, the assessment of playtexts" (Bassnett-McGuire, "The Translator in the Theatre" 40).⁸⁷ The second scholar who sought to find out more about the way translators of the stage work in a quantitative manner is Marja Jänis.⁸⁸ Jänis interviewed eighteen translators and six dramaturges between 1989-1990 and published the results of her survey in 1996. As she points out, prior to the interviews each of the participants received a questionnaire composed of four groups of questions that concerned a) the "career of the translator", b) the "process of translation itself as it is conceived by the translators", c) the "translators' attitudes towards the theatre" and finally d) the "way translators of plays perceive their work as a profession" (344). Finally, there is the survey of Phyllis Zatlin who in 2002-2003 distributed a questionnaire to 36 practicing drama translators from six countries and published the results of her survey in 2005 in her work *Theatrical Translation and Film Adaptation: A Practitioner's View*.⁸⁹

What becomes immediately apparent from the information provided by these two sources is the diversity that characterises drama translators on various levels. There are, for example, considerable differences to be found in the way in which translators for the stage

⁸⁷ Arguing that "information provided by statistics ... can be shaped one way or another", Bassnett-McGuire chose not to give any details with regard to the number or the nationality of the drama translators who participated in her survey ("The Translator in the Theatre" 39). Using the information she provided in her article "The Translator in the Theatre", however, one could deduce that the participants came at least from four different countries, namely Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany.

⁸⁸ According to Jänis (342), there have been at least two more surveys among drama translators that came forward in the time span between the publication of her own work and Bassnett-McGuire's survey: a set of interviews of French drama translators, which were published in the March-April edition of the French journal *Théâtre/Public* in 1982 and another set of interviews of Finnish drama translators, which were published in the Finnish theatre magazine *Teatteri* in 1989. Since these interviews could not be accessed, their results were not included in the research at hand.

⁸⁹ Zatlin does not mention in her work whether the questions she asked the participants were divided into particular thematic groups.

work. According to Marilyn Gaddis Rose, there are six steps that the translation of any given text from one language into another involves. As the scholar points out in her article “Time and Space in the Translation Process” these steps are “preliminary analysis, exhaustive style and content analysis, acclimation of the text, reformulation of the text, analysis of the translation and [finally] review and comparison” (1-2). With reference particularly to the case of translating dramatic texts, Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt builds on Rose’s analysis and adds two more stages, namely “analysis of suitability for the stage [and] decision on what basis to use for the translation from page to stage” (“Towards a Typology of Literary Translation” 489). According to David Johnston, however, drama translators “do not share a common methodology” in the writing and preparation of translations of plays (“Introduction” 7). Terry Hale and Carole-Anne Upton bring forward a similar suggestion in the introduction of their work arguing that there is a wide “range of creative strategies” that drama translators employ during the course of their work (Hale 12). Although one cannot argue that translators do not share to some extent at least similar stages or processes during their work, what Hale, Upton and Johnston are clearly underlining is that not all translators go through them in the same way. The process of reading the playtext, for example, is one that all translators inevitably share. Yet whereas some translators prefer to have read the original creation either in its entirety or at least partly prior to commencing on its translation, others deliberately avoid even thumbing through it in order to “get the pleasure of [an] ‘intensive reading’ from working on the text” (Bell 59). Analysing and understanding the original work is also something that translators have inescapably to go through. However, not all of them use the same tools to that end. Although, for example, the majority of the translators who answered Jänis’s questionnaire refused familiarising themselves with “translations of the source text into other languages or with previous translations into the same target language before or during the translation

process”, there was a limited number of translators who admitted using such material even if only as a kind of alternative dictionary that could “shed light on the meaning of some problematic lexical items” in the original work (348). Respectively, the participants in Susan Bassnett-McGuire’s survey were almost equally divided between those who “regularly used the help of other people” during the translation process, including the creator of the original text as well as members of their family, and those who “felt that such a practice was unacceptable” (“The Translator in the Theatre” 40-41). Finally, similar differences are also to be found among drama translators with regard to the way they go through the unavoidable stage of reviewing or testing their creation. Although, for example, the majority of the drama translators who participated in Bassnett-McGuire’s survey argued that speaking the dialogue out loud constitutes a rather essential part of their creative process, fifteen per cent of them answered negatively (ibid. 41).

The diversity among drama translators is evident not only on the micro-level of their creative process but also on the macro-level of their views on principal aspects of their work. In particular there seem to be three key issues on which the translators’ views differ. The first one, as we saw earlier, concerns the question of whether it ought to be the textual or the performance aspect of the playwright’s creation that they need to give priority to when translating for the stage. The second one constitutes “one of the major bones of contention between academic, or literary, approaches to playmaking, and a more purely theatrical view” (Johnston, “Introduction” 7) and concerns the question of the translators’ linguistic competence in the language of the original work. As the information provided by Bassnett-McGuire’s (“The Translator in the Theatre” 44), Jänis’s (345) and Zatlin’s (24) surveys clearly show, whereas some translators are adamant that understanding the language of the original work is of primary importance when it comes to translating for the stage, others consider it preferable to “know how to translate plays than to be a master of

the source language” (Jänis 345). The third issue on which the translators’ views diverge concerns the question of the actors’ input to their work. Marja Jänis admits that she was surprised to see all of the “translators and dramaturges, including actors who themselves translate plays” who participated in her survey maintaining that “actors are never satisfied with the translation” and that their “requests need not to be considered” by the translators (358). Susan Bassnett-McGuire got a similar response to her own questionnaire from the participating drama translation professionals. As she points out, “about 80 per cent felt that the director was the best judge [for changes in the script], with only about ten per cent feeling that the actors should be involved in the decision” (“The Translator in the Theatre” 45).

Rather unsurprisingly, drama translators are also divided in the way they perceive their own role and status in the theatre and “the scope for personal creativity” (Johnston, “Introduction” 7). As David Johnston points out, there appears to be some significant disagreement among drama translators on whether they “should play feudal servant to their master, or if they are a second author in their own right” (ibid. 7). Susan Bassnett-McGuire’s and Marja Jänis’s surveys confirm that there is a clear division between translators who consider themselves creative artists in their own right and those understanding their role in the theatre as one of “interpreter, deputy or surrogate of the playwright” (Jänis 352). As Bassnett-McGuire points out, one-third of the translators who answered her questionnaire “saw themselves as intermediaries, one-third as artists restricted by the original [,] very few as [artists] working out of an original [and] slightly less than a third ... as all three simultaneously” (“The Translator in the Theatre” 44). The “subservient position” (ibid. 44) in which many translators see themselves is also evident in the results of Jänis’s survey. According to the scholar, twelve of the translators who took part in her survey argued that they see themselves as “servants of the playwright”, two considered

their mission to be to serve “those producing the actual performance” and two perceived themselves “as servants of the theatregoers” (352).

There are various explanations for the drama translators’ differences. As Phyllis Zatlin points out, for example, one has to keep in mind that it is not only trained translators who translate for the stage but also “both playwrights and other theatre professionals as well as academics” (24). The results of Jānis’s survey confirm Zatlin’s suggestion. According to Jānis, the majority of the participants in her survey “were or had been engaged in some profession closely linked to the theatre ... as actors [,] dramaturges and/or playwrights”, none of them “earned his or her living exclusively by translating plays” and only one-third of them had a university degree in languages and lived on their translation income (345). Similarly there are considerable differences to be found in the conditions under which drama translators are asked to work. This applies not only to the type of collaboration they enjoy with a theatrical company, which may range from regular to occasional, but also to the nature of the tasks they are assigned with. In addition to the creation of an interlingual, complete or literal translation of a playwright’s work, for example, it is not uncommon for drama translators to be asked to produce an intralingual adaptation of a playtext. As the acclaimed playwright and drama translator John Clifford narrates, for instance, one of his first professional jobs in the theatre was “to translate and adapt” Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* on behalf of the TAG theatre company “for a cast of seven to perform [it] in under two hours” to schools in the deprived areas of the city of Glasgow (269).⁹⁰

The differences in the drama translators’ educational and professional background and the diversity of the tasks assigned to them do not appear, however, to be solely

⁹⁰ In a similar manner to Clifford, Michael Frayn narrates in his work *Stage Directions: Writings for the Theatre 1970-2008* that when he objected to the National Theatre’s request to translate a play by Carlo Goldoni because he could not read the original, the dramaturge of the National explained to him that “translating a play [does not] involve reading the original. You simply [look] at a selection of existing translations and [rewrite] them” (viii-ix).

accountable for their varying working methodologies or their opposing views on the aforementioned core issues. After all, these differences are not only to be found between translators who have had a different academic or professional training, or have worked under different conditions, but also among translators who share a similar background on all three levels. Considering this, one could consequently argue that perhaps the key to understanding what causes the diversity and variety that characterises the techniques and attitudes of drama translators is not to be found in what divides them but rather in what unites them. According to David Johnston, all translational work towards a theatrical production is subjected to

“... the way in which translators negotiate between the moral absolutism of their love for the original author or work, and the pragmatism that comes driving out of the knowledge that the creature created from that love is not just a private thing; it has to function under public scrutiny” (“Introduction” 8).

There are two points that make Johnston’s observation particularly interesting. The first one is his reference to the *love* felt by translators for the playwrights or their work, which implies that there is a particular type of contact or rather a bond that drama translators experience with the original creation or creator on a level other than the purely intellectual. Interestingly enough, however, when looking at the two primary sources of information on drama translators and their work one rarely comes across information with regard to the constituent elements of that contact. Although drama translators speak often about the affinity they have felt during the course of their work with the play, its characters or their creator and advise their colleagues to also seek to form such a bond, they rarely discuss how this non-intellectual type of contact is established. As a supplement to their accounts we will therefore need to turn to the writings of translators of literature and poetry, who also appear to share this particular type of *love* for the original author or work.

Their experiences will serve as the two secondary sources of information about drama translators and their work.

Reviewing the information provided by all four sources, it seems that the translators' special relationship with the original creator and his or her work is primarily formed through their immersion in the imaginary world of the original creation, a process that for many translators begins long before their actual work on the text. As Anthony Vivis points out, for example, "after thirty years, I still open no dictionary before I have not only read but lived with a text, perhaps for months or years" (38). Although one can recognise in Vivis's attempt the need to acquire an overall yet solid impression of the "style, idiom, themes and attitude" of the original work, or as he puts it borrowing a Brechtian term, to get "the 'Gestus' of the play as a whole" prior to starting his work on it (ibid. 38), once having embarked on its rendering, translators seek to deepen their contact with the fictional world by attempting to see and hear the characters in their minds. According to Marja Jänis, there appears to be a wide consensus among drama translators that "the ability to see the world behind the words of the play and the ability to hear the dialogue are needed by those who want to succeed in translating plays" (351). As John Rutherford's experience clearly indicates, however, one of the problematic aspects of this particular type of contact with the imaginary world is maintaining it. After an unsuccessful attempt to start working on Cervantes's story *Don Quixote* while teaching at the university, Rutherford realised that more time was needed "to bring the characters to life into [his] imagination and hear their voices in [his] head, time to develop and maintain momentum" (71). In order to reverse this unproductive state, he decided to travel to Galicia, to stay at a friend's house and to continue his work there. However, although the change of scenery was helpful at first, the problem persisted.

“Towards the end of the first volume, which I translated during the autumn, winter and early spring, the trickle of words was drying up and I could not understand why, until one morning as I stood in the great meadow between the sea and the hills that is my friend Moncho’s back garden: what I needed was space and light, the long hours of wintry translation in my tiny cottage had given me mild claustrophobia. So I moved my study to Moncho’s house and translated the second volume in the gentle shade of the old fig tree in the corner of his meadow. Three families of great tits, attracted by strategically placed peanuts, hopped over my books and over me. All was well again. Quixote and Sancho sprang back to life in my imagination, their voices echoed again in my head, the words flowed even though I often did not know where they were flowing from” (76).

However anecdotal Rutherford’s account may seem, or for that matter any of the other translators’ accounts that will be used on the same topic in the chapters to follow, there are but a handful of first-hand descriptions available to us with regard to the difficulties translators are confronted with not only when attempting to enter but also to stay in the fictional world of the original creation. Although we will return to Rutherford’s experience at a later stage in order to explore it in more detail, his case sets the stage for what appears to be another problematic aspect of the translators’ effort to penetrate into the original creation and to come as close as possible to the fictional characters and their world, namely to transmit their experience through their work and share it with its recipients.

This brings us also to the second interesting point in Johnston’s earlier comment, namely the conflict raised and the *negotiation* necessitated by the translators’ attempt to transmute their *love* for the work or its original creator into *a working piece of theatre*, or as Edwin Honig calls it “the intermediate area between the [original] work itself and the ... translation of it” (14). In his essay “Securing the Performability of the Play in Translation” Johnston describes the translators’ effort to resolve this conflict by finding “viable solutions” that would satisfy both parties as “creative struggle” and maintains that it is this *struggle* that constitutes the “default activity of literary translation” (25). Johnston’s understanding of the experience of *creative struggle* as the common denominator in the work of all translators of literature has a distinct significance for the research at hand for

two reasons. Firstly, because it reveals the core element that unites drama translators as creators of the target language version of the playwright's original work but simultaneously divides them in terms of the tools they will use in order to secure the *viability* of their own creation. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, because it promotes a remarkably similar understanding of the notion of creativity in the case of translating for the stage to the one Stanislavsky appears to have in mind for the case of acting, namely as applied imagination. It is on this common ground that we will now proceed to examine in more detail each of the steps Stanislavsky's actors and drama translators follow during their respective creative processes and to evaluate the usefulness and applicability of the Russian director's suggested ways for stimulating the performers' imagination, securing its uninterrupted flow and finally transforming it into an accessible reality to the translators' own *creative struggle*.

Chapter III

The Art of Experiencing As Emotional Identification:

The Period of Study

III.1. Reading

The work of Stanislavsky's actors of the *theatre of experiencing* commences with an exhaustive and extensive reading of the text. As it is upon the studious exploration of the playwright's words that the actors' physical and psychological work depends, Stanislavsky considers reading already a "part of the creative process" and not a mere preliminary to acting, a necessary evil standing between the actors and the portrayal of their characters (*Creating a Role* 7).⁹¹ To explain how damaging it can be for the actor's imagination and creative mood to read the text "hurriedly ... in a railroad train, in a cab [or] during intermissions" (ibid. 7), Stanislavsky devotes several pages of his work to underlining the importance of the actor's first encounter with text, which he likens "with the first meeting between a man and a woman ... who are destined to be sweethearts, lovers, or mates" (ibid. 3). "You cannot erase a spoiled first impression any more than you can recover lost maidenhood," he concludes, urging his pupils to take all the necessary precautions in order to be "spiritually and physically buoyant" before starting to read the playtext (ibid. 3-7).

Reading holds a prominent and indispensable position in translation as well. As was pointed out in the introductory chapter on drama translation, however, translators, unlike Stanislavsky's actors, do not share a common reading strategy. Nor do they necessarily employ a single reading methodology throughout the course of their work. In his study of advanced translation students, Hans Peter Krings observed two distinct reading methodologies, namely a "sukzessive Abarbeitungsstrategie" (179) or a "successive processing strategy" (Shreve et al. 24), which refers to reading for acquiring a global

⁹¹ According to Sharon Carnicke, it was as late as 1935, a short three years before his death, that Stanislavsky attempted to apply a new rehearsal technique which involved, as he described in a letter to his son, "reading the play today, and tomorrow rehearsing it on stage" (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 154). Considering, however, that for nearly twenty years Stanislavsky advocated the lengthy examination of the text, one could argue that despite his later decision to keep the reading of the script to a minimum and to propose the immediate physical exploration of the play, David Cole is perhaps right to argue that "for Stanislavski it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that acting begins and ends in reading" (8).

comprehension of the text, and an “Entlastungsstrategie” (ibid. 179) or “pre-translation-relief” strategy (Shreve et al. 25), which refers to reading both for understanding and solving comprehension problems. Shreve et al. confirmed Krings’s findings in their own survey conducted among professional translators and argued that apart from the aforementioned strategies there is an additional “variety of alternative forms of reading” involved, sometimes interchangeably, in the translation process, ranging from “a kind of ‘serial reading’”, where the translator reads and translates only a segment of the text before proceeding to the next, to “a kind of *skimming* technique”, where the translator looks merely “at headings and titles [or] introductory comments and conclusions” before starting to translate (ibid. 24-25).

Although the diversity of the reading methodologies that translators employ when confronted with the source text (ST) is *per se* rather expected, one cannot fail to notice that it may also lead to a paradoxical conclusion: considering the inextricable link between reading and comprehending a text, in other words granted that the “comprehension of a source text comes from reading” (Séguinot 21), one could accordingly suggest that the less translators read the ST before starting to work on its rendering, as apparently happens in the case of the *skimming* technique, the more they translate it without actually having understood it.

The cause of what is evidently a fallacious assumption lies not in a miscalculation of the ratio between reading and comprehending a text but rather in a misconception concerning the way comprehension operates as a constituent element of the translation process.⁹² According to Pedro Macizo and Teresa Bajo, there are three major processes that

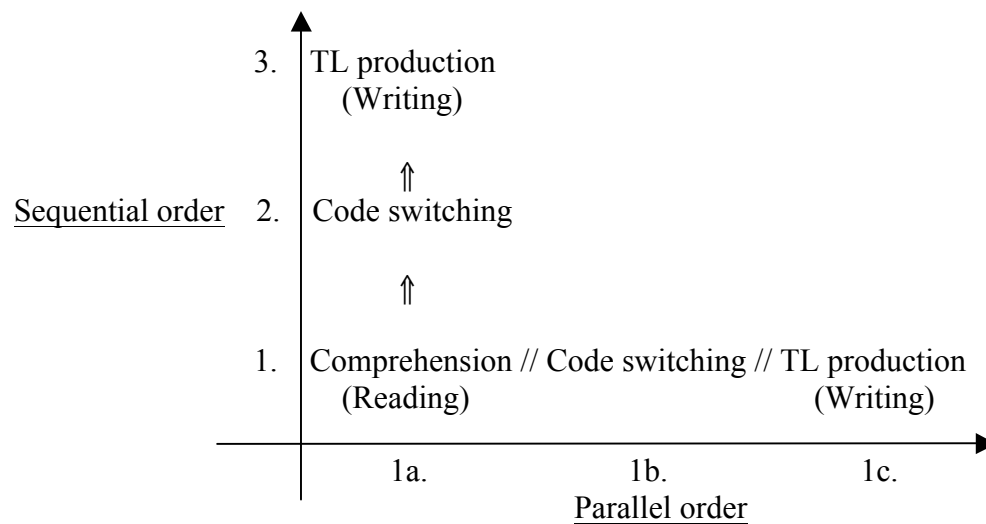
⁹² Despite referring to comprehension as a singular process, it should be noted that, as Macizo and Bajo point out, “language comprehension includes a set of processes going from speech processing (segmentation and classification of the incoming input), lexical access (recognition of isolated words and access to information associated with them), and sentential processing (extraction and combination of syntactic information to obtain a sentence interpretation), to discourse processing (integration and interpretation of successive sentences to arrive at a global mental representation)” (“When Translation Makes the

occur during the translation task: the comprehension or “analysis and understanding of the source text or discourse in the Source Language (SL)”, which is unavoidably achieved through reading, the “switch between two linguistic codes” and finally the writing or, in other words, the “production of the text or discourse in the Target Language (TL)” (“Reading for Repetition” 2).

These three stages of the translation process, Macizo and Bajo continue, can be linked to each other in two different ways. According to what is known as the vertical or serial perspective, they are understood as distinct operations performed in a sequential order. In other words, the translators first “engage in comprehension processes to construct an integrated meaningful representation and only then [do they] proceed to reformulate the input message to the TL” (ibid. 2).

According to the horizontal or parallel approach, on the other hand, translators do not “comprehend the source text fully and only then begin the process of translation [but] rather [are] working on various possibilities for translation at the same time that [they are] comprehending the source text” (Danks and Griffin 174). In this case reading, text comprehension, code switching and TL production are performed in a parallel, simultaneous manner. The two models can be represented schematically in the following way:

Difference” 181). It is therefore only in the interest of simplification that I will be not using the proper plural form of the term.



Were one to attempt to match these two models of the translation process to the translators' contrastive reading preferences, one would be led to argue that Krings's successive processing and pre-translation-relief reading strategies, which aim distinctly at isolating reading and comprehending from the remaining stages of the translation process, could be assigned to the vertical approach.⁹³ The same can be argued for the *serial reading* technique as during each stage of what appears to be a segmented translation process, reading and comprehending clearly precede writing. The minimal time allocated to reading prior to translating within the framework of the *skimming* technique, on the other hand, seems to attest to the horizontal model, as it shifts and pairs comprehension with the upcoming stage of writing. Following the paradigm of the translation process models it could therefore be argued that the way translators read is not as chaotic as might have been initially suggested but can be classified after all as performed in mainly two different modes, a vertical and a horizontal one. As far as the difference between these modes is concerned, it lies in the timing of processing the information accessed through the reading of the text, i.e. either before or during the stage of writing.

⁹³ Although Shreve et al argue that they observed several reading methodologies, I will be only using the two Krings clearly identified in his study and the two Shreve et al gave a descriptive name to in their research.

The notion of a vertical and a horizontal processing of the playtext are arguably also to be found in the Stanislavsky's System. Stanislavsky's earlier described rehearsing method of "affective cognition", for example, according to which the actors' comprehension of the play takes place prior to their physical exploration of it, can be said to signal a vertical processing of the playwright's creation (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 155).⁹⁴ Conversely, Stanislavsky's latest rehearsal device of "active analysis" (ibid. 155), or "analysis through actions", as Sonia Moore prefers to call it (93), according to which the actors, following a limited reading of the text, become acquainted with the play through active, physical and verbal improvisations, appears to correspond to a horizontal processing of the playtext.

<u>Translators' reading method</u>	<u>Translation process model</u>	<u>Stanislavsky's rehearsing method</u>
1. Successive processing 2. Pre-translation relief 3. Serial	Vertical	Affective cognition
4. Skimming	Horizontal	Active analysis

Despite the invaluable insight the correlation between the translators' reading methodologies and the two translation process models has to offer into the way these appear to be linked with Stanislavsky's rehearsing systems, what remains unanswered is what causes this bifurcation of the translators' reading preferences in the first place.⁹⁵ In

⁹⁴ In Hapgood's translation the Russian *chuvstvennoe poznanie*, which Carnicke translates as "active analysis" (*Stanislavsky in Focus*, 155), was rendered as "analysis of feelings" (Stanislavsky, *Creating a Role* 8). In Benedetti's new translation the particular passage reads: "Analysis is getting to know, but, in our language, to know is to feel" (Stanislavski, *An Actor's Work* 103).

⁹⁵ As far as Stanislavsky's rehearsing techniques are concerned, the reason was rather predictable: after twenty years of experimenting with affective cognition, Stanislavsky realised that the painstaking reading of the text and the postponement of the actors' physical involvement with the play, led to the performers

which cases, and why, do translators choose to apply either approach? Are particular texts, such as a dramatic one, to be excluded from either one of these models or are both approaches applicable to all types of text? Are translators solely responsible for these changes or are they externally imposed on their work?

Surprisingly enough, one can assign neither approach to a particular text type. In other words, one cannot argue, despite being perhaps instinctively prone to do so, that translators use the horizontal approach only when confronted with technical texts, such as a device manual or a legal document, for example, where their familiarity with its structure, style, and terminology would encourage them to minimise the reading and proceed straight to its rendering. For reasons other than one's "familiarity with the genre, with the discourse style, or with the specific ... writer's style" (Danks and End 274), literature translators are also likely to choose to invert what Danica Seleskovitch describes as the "the logical sequence of translation" and to "translate first (in the hope of understanding later), rather than to understand before translating" (95). In her article "Translation: Walking the Tightrope of Illusion" Anthea Bell, for example, talks about a particular Dutch translator, who wishing to enjoy the pleasure of discovering a text, consciously "prefers not to have read the book before she starts work on it" (59). Sifting through the text using first one's instinctive translational choices seems also to be behind the literary translators' common practice of producing at least one preliminary target language version of the ST before finalising their work. Bearing this in mind, one could safely assume that both horizontal and vertical readings of the text preceded respectively, or even conversely, the "fast first draft[s] and [the] slow second one[s]" produced by the majority of drama translators who participated in the surveys conducted by Susan Bassnett-McGuire ("The Translator in the Theatre" 40-41) and Marja Jānis (346-347). Furthermore, considering the claim brought

coming "on stage with a stuffed head and an empty heart and can act nothing" (qtd. in Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 155). Such enervation was sufficient for Stanislavsky to decide to change his rehearsing principles.

forward by Shreve et al that “translators may switch reading strategies” during the translation activity (25), one could suggest that this switch might not necessarily occur only between the different drafts of the translated text but also during the process of producing each individual draft. Considering, for example, the earlier described *serial reading* technique, one could argue that translators may change the way they read between each segment of the text they process.

However, as the latter case may be argued to indicate, whether or not reading will constitute a self-contained, autonomous stage in the process of any given translation task does not depend solely on the translators’ personal or professional idiosyncrasy. In a seeming contradiction to the earlier assertion that one cannot assign certain text types to either reading/translating approach, the nature of text itself or, more accurately put, the nature of each fragment of the text may actually influence, if not to say dictate, how it will or can be read and translated. According to one of the drama translators who participated in Bassnett-McGuire’s survey there is, for example, “a clear distinction between the length of time involved in translating Shakespeare and that involved in translating a contemporary play” (“The Translator in the Theatre” 41). Although the German translator’s reference to the Bard’s plays being more time consuming in translation than other dramatic works appears to place emphasis on speed rather than on method, thus excluding neither the horizontal nor the vertical reading/translating method as a possible technique to be employed for the rendering of the English playwright’s works, one could safely assume that the delay caused is due to the singularity of the text and not of the reader/translator.

Before proceeding to discuss the role of the nature of the text in the way translators read, there is also a second, more crucial point in the German translator’s comment that should not go unnoticed. It remains unclear which text the translator is talking about: is it the original text (OT) or the one used as ST? As was pointed out in the introductory section

on drama translation, it is not always the case that the translator's ST and the playwright's OT are the same and as such they are likely to affect the translators' reading and rendering methodologies in a different way. Since the focus of the present discussion is on the way reading in and for translation takes place, it seems necessary to make clear that, for the moment, our interest will centre only on the text that translators' actually use, i.e. the ST. One of the accounts describing the pragmatics of the translator's reading of the ST is that of Jean Delisle, according to whom

“[t]he translator perusing a text to be translated ... finds himself in the same position as a unilingual reader acquainting himself with its contents. Like the reader, the translator is an active participant in the communication process. In order to discover how this silent communication by means of the written word occurs, we must determine how the reader goes about analyzing the relationships that underlie a message so as to grasp its meaning” (54)

Although Delisle's description is aligned with the fundamental precepts that, however marginally and in whatever form, translation “necessarily involves reading prior to the writing” (Bassnett, “Intricate Pathways” 3), that the translator is “first of all a reader” (Bassnett-McGuire, “The Translator in the Theatre” 40), and that it is through reading that meaning is formed, there are two points in his argumentation that make apparent why the nature of the ST and the translator's relation to it constitute two more ambiguous areas of exploring how reading in and for translation comes into being.

The first problematic point in Delisle's commentary is his assertion that during the translation process the translators assume the place of the speakers of the source text's language with whom they share the same ability to read the writer's work. Recognising behind Delisle's conception the case of an “intralingual translation or *translation proper*”, which Roman Jakobson defined as “the interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language” (114), one could argue that the reading Delisle refers to takes place “in the

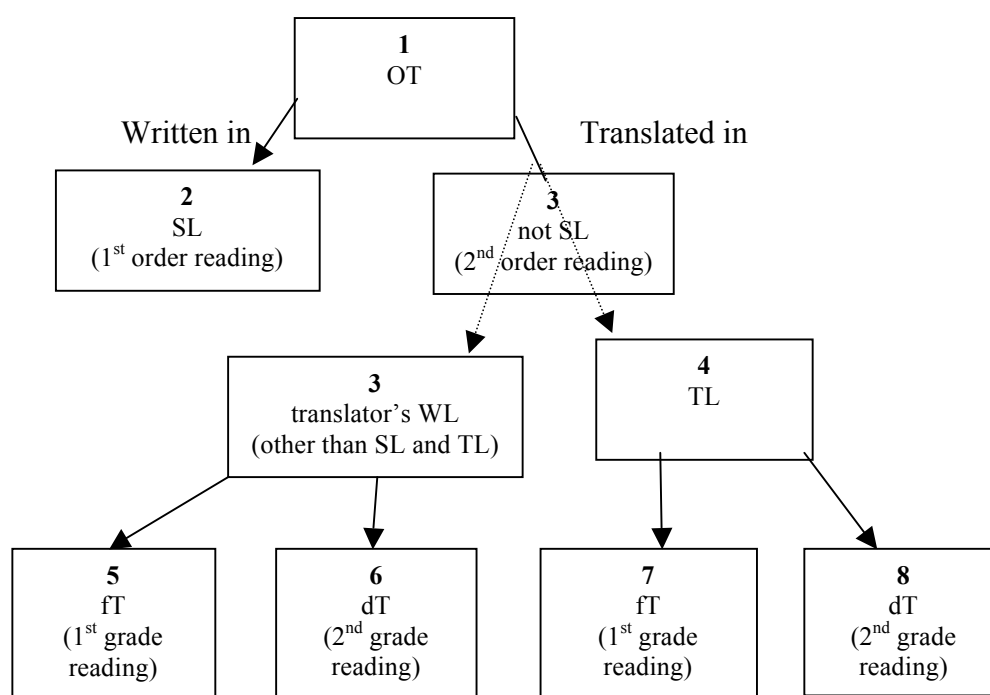
translator's second language" (Bassnett, "Intricate Pathways" 3). However, nearly all of the translators of poetry Edwin Honig interviewed for his work *The Poet's Other Voice: Conversations on Literary Translation* admitted to having worked from languages they did not speak, as did the majority of the drama translators David Johnston interviewed for his collection of articles *Stages of Translation*. Evidently such practice is neither the exception that proves the rule nor something the profession's community frowns upon. Although "in general" the respondents in Phyllis Zatlin's questionnaire answered affirmatively to the question "do you always translate directly from a language you know well" (24), three fifths of the translators who participated in Bassnett-McGuire's survey argued that "it is acceptable to translate from a third language, not the original but a translation" ("The Translator in the Theatre" 40) while the "most experienced translators of plays" who answered Jānis' questionnaire "stressed that it [is] more important to know how to translate plays than to be a master of the source language" (345).

Regardless of whether competence in the language of the original should be considered a *conditio sine qua non* for translating or not, or whether there ought to be a different term describing "what is effectively a translation of a translation of a text" (Bassnett-McGuire, "The Translator in the Theatre" 40), the fact remains that, evidently more often than not, practising literature translators carry out their work by reading as their original an alternative variety of source texts other than the OT itself.⁹⁶ These alternative source texts may be *ad hoc* commissioned literal translations or even already existing, published translations of the OT. Based on the type of text they read, one could therefore argue that translators can be divided into two main categories: first-order readers, who

⁹⁶ For Eivor Martinus, for example, the "rehash of old translations backed up by a 'literal translation', which acts as a cover ... shows a blatant disregard for the translator and for the copyright ... , [b]ut above all for the foreign playwright" (110). George E. Wellwarth, on the other hand, argues that while the process of a two-tier translation system "may be justifiable for obscure languages, where the combination of a person who is bilingual, linguistically sensitive in a literary sense, and equally at home in both cultural ambiances can hardly be expected, it is inexcusable as a device for translating from one of the world's major languages to another" (142).

know the source language (SL) and can thus read and translate directly from the OT, and second-order readers, who are not acquainted with the language of the original text's culture and therefore rely on reading someone else's translation, which may be written either in one of their working languages (WL) or in the target language itself (TL), for understanding the OT and producing their own translation of it. Going one step further in examining the case of the second order readers/translators one could argue that considering the two ends of the spectrum of translated texts they are likely to use as their ST, namely a polished, finalised translation (fT) on the one hand and an unrefined, word for word, draft translation (dT) on the other, the translators who belong to this particular category may find themselves participating respectively in two types of reading activities: a first-grade one, which is arguably the same as that of a first-order translator/reader, in the sense that the text used has acquired its final form, and a second-grade, more impeded one due to the oddness of the text.⁹⁷ The complex route the OT may follow before being read by the translator can be represented schematically in the following way:

⁹⁷ In the introduction of their collection of articles *The Craft of Translation* John Biguenet and Rainer Schulte argue that a "literal translation deals with the surface appearance of words without a reflection of the directions of meaning that the original author tried to materialise behind that surface" (xi). "The reader of such a translation", Biguenet and Schulte continue, "will be confused and will experience great difficulties in visualizing the situations of the original text and its relationships to subsequent expansions of such situations" (ibid. xi).



Following the diagram shown above, there are at least four additional types of texts, other than the OT itself, that translators may find themselves using, i.e. reading, as their ST.⁹⁸ The nature of these source texts appears to have a double impact on reading in and for translation. On the one hand it affects the mechanics of the entire translation process. Although, for example, the OT may be read and translated both in a horizontal and a vertical mode, not all of the aforementioned alternative source texts appear to be equally open to the two models describing the translation process. Contrary to a finalised translation written in one of the translator's working languages (box 5), for example, one cannot simultaneously read and render in the target language a finalised translation that is already written in the target language (box 8). In a similar way, although a horizontal process may be followed for re-translating a draft translation written in one of the translator's working languages (box 6) into a draft translation in the TL, a vertical approach

⁹⁸ The number of texts would increase in a more detailed diagram that would also include the possible origin of these additional ST. A finalised translation written in the TL, for example, may have originated neither from the SL nor necessarily from one of the translator's working languages but from a third language.

seems to be more suitable, if not to say unavoidable, for the text's transformation into a finalised version in the TL. The vertical model seems also to be the translator's sole choice for the transformation of a draft translation written in the TL (box 7) into a finalised version in the TL.

The second aspect of the influence of this incompatibility between the two translation reading/process models and the alternative source texts concerns the notion of the stage of code switching which, according to the theoretical premises of both models, intervenes between the stage of reading/comprehension and that of TL production, promoting allusively the impression that translators read in one language and write in another. Setting aside whether processing texts within the same language should be termed an "intralingual translation or *rewording*", which according to Roman Jakobson's definition is the "interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language" (114), or a "paraphrase", which according to Douglas Robinson applies to any "work that is not translated directly from a foreign original but reworded from a previous translation in the same language" ("Paraphrase" 167), one could argue that given that two of the translations that are likely to serve as source texts may already be written in the TL, translators, particularly of drama, do not necessarily switch between linguistic codes. Yet what is the impact this variety of potential source texts could have on the way translators read? And is it only their reading that it influences?

Out of the four possible types of translations that are likely to function as ST it would seem that the case of a literal, draft translation written in TL (box 8) constitutes the ideal candidate for such a discussion for primarily three reasons. The first is that reading an untreated text is far more challenging than reading a finalised one as it requires from the translator the skill not only to understand it as such but also to identify the gaps or rough edges of its literality in order to refine it. The second reason is that considering that the text

is already written in the target culture's language one could argue that it may potentially offer, despite its roughness, final translational solutions. These "lucky strikes", as Anthony Vivis prefers to call them (38), may exert a greater influence on the translator's rendering choices. The third and main reason is that particularly in the case of translating for the theatre, to work from a literal is one of the standard practices employed for the transfer of plays from one language into another (Bassnett, "Translating for the Theatre" 101; Clark 25; Hale and Upton 10).

Starting off with a general presumption one could argue that a literal's influence on the translator's reading is neither beyond question nor out of the question. As Noel Clark argues in his article "Translating for the Love of It", "since translation implies a personal response to the author's text, to read someone else's version first would be to risk preconditioning or, at least, colouring one's own response to the original" (26). There are three points in Clark's observation that need to be taken up. The first is that using a translation as a ST may also result in the translators being misled to *respond* not to the author of the original but to author of the text at hand. Although we will return shortly to the interconnection between the translators' reading and their writing as it is also in Delisle's description that the particular issue is raised, it should be noted that even though an experienced translator who has tamed his or her concentration is unlikely to fall into this trap, less experienced or careless translators might not be able to resist the temptation of entering into discourse with the creator of the literal instead with the creator of the original. The second point is that by knowing that he or she will be working from a literal and not a finalised translation of the OT, the translator is likely to adopt from the beginning a rather reserved attitude toward the ST. According to Robert Bly, when producing "a literal version, we [translators] don't worry about nuances – ... phrases that are flat, prosaic, dumpy are fine ... we only want the thrust" (15). Granted that translators are aware of such

practice, one would expect them to meet their ST with skepticism. The third and most important point is that Clark's reference to the notion of *risk* could be thought to mean that reading another translation prior to producing one's own is a sufficient but not a necessary condition for a translator to become influenced. In other words, it might be possible for a translator not to be affected by his or her reading of someone else's translation. David Hare's account, however, of his experience reading and translating Bertolt Brecht's play *Galileo* while working from a published "Methuen book [where] someone has just written the literal meanings of every line and then put three versions of the play down side by side, all in one volume" (142), may serve as an example of the power the reading of a literal is likely to exert on the translator:

"... [I]n the famous scene where Galileo argues in reply to the little monk ... Brecht ... gives one of the greatest statements in defence of religion, and I felt that he did not give Galileo strong enough arguments in return. So I beefed those arguments up; I said this would be a better scene if Galileo came back stronger. I couldn't tell if this was a linguistic or a dramaturgical problem, I couldn't tell if in the German he does seem to come back equally strong, but in the literal it didn't seem to me to have as much power. So I beefed it up to make it a more valid scene" (ibid, 142).

Setting aside whether the dialogue between the character of the little monk and that of Galileo is in fact imbalanced or not in the original German text, one cannot fail to notice the impact the reading of Brecht's translation had on Hare.⁹⁹ Hare's expressed resolution to "try and clean out the gutters" may have stemmed from having read that Brecht had worked

⁹⁹ It should be noted that, at least in my opinion, Galileo and the little monk do not appear in the German original text to be engaged in an uneven exchange of arguments. The little monk begins by describing the difficult life of his family in the olive fields and how they endure their hard labor thinking that they are in the centre of the universe, that "God's eye is set on them" [my translation] (Brecht 518). Galileo's disproof of the geocentric model, the monk continues, will distress them as it will show them that "*hunger* means *not having anything to eat* and not *being tested* [by God]" [my translation and emphasis] (ibid. 518). Galileo counter argues in a rather Socratic manner that what his theory actually proves is that the pope placed deliberately the earth in the centre of the universe so that he can be placed in the centre of the earth. The fact that Galileo's monologue is half as long as the little monk's can be explained considering that, as a scientist, Galileo could not have talked in the amplified manner the little monk does, who despite being also a scientist is primarily a man of the church.

on the play “for seventeen years ... that in the end he himself almost became confused about what he was trying to do” (ibid. 141); yet his stated uncertainty about the origin of what he identified as *problem* in the particular segment of Brecht’s work arguably leads one to suggest that Hare’s work was pervaded by a lack of confidence in the authority not only of the original product and creator but also of the literal translation he worked from and its author. Focusing our attention not on his apparent insecurity toward the original creation, to which we shall return at a later point, but toward his target language source, one could argue that the problem Hare faced could not have been that the literal version of the German playwright’s text he used as his ST was not “all one could desire in a final version”, as Ted Hughes describes János Csokits’s literal translations of János Pilinszky’s poems to be (17). As was pointed out earlier, a literal’s aim is not to provide the translator with a finished version of the OT but rather with an outline of its principle theme or reasoning; a literal by definition cannot be but an “unvarnished text” (Clark 25). It seems therefore that either Hare did not “instantaneous[ly] ... grant *ab initio*” his “initiative trust, [his] investment of belief” to his ST and its creator, as George Steiner argues that translators do (312), or that the ST did not manage to “assure [him] that [his] fantasy was superfluous (and probably illogical as well ...)” (T. Hughes 17). By having neither access to the language of the original text nor the translator who produced the literal version “there at [his] elbow” (Farrell 220), Hare – either betrayed by his ST or too timid to trust it in the first place – appears to have transferred the responsibility for guidance to his own, second-order understanding and went on to create what seemed to him a *better, more valid* version of Brecht’s work by translating “the strangeness of the original work into the standard of [his] own sensibility” (T. Hughes 18). Setting aside whether Hare’s case is to be interpreted as a *coloured* or *preconditioned response* toward Brecht, a misdirected one toward Galileo’s translator or even a mixture of both, and whether he managed to produce a

successful translation after all, one could argue that in this case the reading of the literal appears to have had an impairing influence on the particular translator. Instead of challenging in a positive manner his *sensibility* as reader, writer and translator so as to lead or force him to further explore and widen its boundaries, it somehow managed to compromise it. Instead of leading him into the text, it excluded him from it.

That is not to say, however, that literal translations are bound to limit the *sensibility* or comprehension of a second-order reader/translator who participates in a “‘two-tier’ translation system”, as Bassnett-McGuire terms the production of “a ‘literal’ draft by a bilingual translator, and a playable version by a monolingual playwright” (“The Translator in the Theatre” 40). By not restricting themselves merely to the reading of the literal but attempting also to reconstruct the reading experience of the original, for example, translators could avoid the negative effects a literal translation could have on them as readers. Richard Wilbur’s description of his experience translating three poems of Andrey Voznesensky from Russian, a language he did not know, while working from an unfinished, literal version, may serve as an example of such a case:

“For one thing, I always get a lot of information out of my informant. I spent ... a couple of days sitting ... with Max Hayward [who] read over the poems to me in Russian, and he gave me, with admirable restraint, strictly prosaic translations of them ... and I asked questions about the individual Russian words - what their flavours were, whether they were high or low – that sort of thing. I took notes all the time about what he told me. ... I would never try to translate anything without the original there - even where I do not understand the language. Looking at the originals of these ... poems, I was able to catch something of their rhythm. I recognised certain words, and so drew closer, or felt I was drawing closer, to the poems themselves. In the case of Russian, I’ve boned up in a kind of elementary way on the language, so that at least I have leapt the hedge of the Cyrillic alphabet and can sound the lines to myself ... By the time I was through, I really had done ... about as much thinking, or researching, or recognizing, or questioning ... as I would do in producing a poem of my own” (92-93).¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Contrary to drama translation scholars and practitioners who refer to the creator of the OT’s literal version in the TL either as a *translator* or, in a more covert, amplified and rather dismissive manner as the *person who did or produced the literal*, poetry translators appear to have established the use of a common codename, calling him or her an *informant*. Interestingly enough and despite the noun’s negative connotations, the notion of an *informant* assisting the translator in his or her work seems to go hand-in-

There are two interesting points in Wilbur's narration that need to be pointed out. The first one is that his meticulous approach highlights some of the aspects of reading for translation that, although unlikely to trouble a first-order reader/translator, can have a significant effect on a non-speaker of the SL. For example, having the original SL text at hand; being able to understand the ST language even a little or knowing a cognate language; being able to pronounce the words of the original or at least having the text read back by someone else; collaborating closely with someone who knows the language, a "resource person", as James Holmes calls it (58), someone who is ideally not a mere bilingual but another experienced translator, all these are of vital importance when approaching a text not via the language it was originally written in but through a word for word translation of it.

The second point is that Wilbur appears to have managed to establish a completely different, more intimate relationship with the OT than Hare did. His decision to attempt to overcome the impediment of the unknown language and to decode its foreign words and their hidden meanings and unfamiliar sounds led Wilbur to seek out and explore facets of the OT that would have remained unknown to him were he to have limited himself to the reading of Hayward's *restrained, strictly prosaic* literal. Regardless, yet again, of how successful or unfortunate his undertaking may be considered to have been, this exploration appears not only to have provided him with something similar to a first-order reader's understanding of the text but also to have allowed his *sensibility* to *draw closer*, as he puts it, to the original poem.

It is not, however, only the act of reading that the nature of the ST is likely to

hand with the understanding of the translator as an "interrogator" of "the world, the cultural-specific references", a metaphor often used by David Johnston (*Stages of Translation* 285; "Securing the Performability" 37).

influence. Returning to Clark's suggestion that the *risk* translators take by reading someone else's translation prior to producing their own concerns their *response* to the author of the original, one could argue that the ST may also have an impact on the way translators write. This brings us back to Delisle's account and the second problematic point in his reasoning, namely that by arguing that translators function as readers to the ST writer, he assumes that, conversely, they act as writers to the TT recipients. Yet does this "dual circuit" manifest itself in an independent or an interdependent way during the translation process (Seleskovitch 97)? The interconnection between reading and writing constitutes the final obscure area of reading in and for translation. According to Karla Déjean Le Féal, reading and writing for translation are to be understood not only as two distinct but also unrelated processes:

"Specific translation know-how starts where the normal reading ends ... carrying the analysis performed in the reading stage one step further so that it can link up with the writing stage. As for the operations themselves, they seem ... to be exactly the same as those commonly performed by any interested reader and skilful writer" (237).

The interesting point in Déjean Le Féal's argumentation is not her reluctance to recognise the reader/translator's analysis as part of the translation process, to which one could object arguing that "a translation model cannot be limited to translation-specific operations, or a translation specific apparatus if it is to reflect the variables that determine the actual output of the translation process" (Séguinot 21). Nor is it her assertion that there is a distinct reading stage where the analysis of the text takes place, which, as was shown earlier, is not always the case with translators. It is rather her description of the reading translators perform as *normal*. The problem, of course, is not the French scholar's choice of adjective but her underlying suggestion that, as Delisle seems also to be arguing, the

translator's reading does not differ from that of an ordinary reader.¹⁰¹ Setting aside for a moment what is to be understood under the notion of an *ordinary* reader and making clear that from this point onward we will consider only the case of OT serving as ST, it should be mentioned that Delisle and Déjean Le Féal's suggestion appears to be, at least quantitatively, confirmed by Shreve et al's empirical study. Following the results of their experiment across three groups of postgraduate translation students who were asked to read the same sample text respectively for comprehension, in anticipation of translating and in anticipation of paraphrasing it, Shreve et al concluded that "while the translator's reading of a text may be to some extent more thorough and deliberate than that of an ordinary reader, it is not likely to be markedly so" (36).

Basil Hatim and Ian Mason, on the other hand, object to the theoretical premises of the translator's equation with an *ordinary* reader. They argue that "the translator ... uses as input to the translation process information which would normally be the output, and therefore the end of the reading process" (224). Peter Bush also believes that "a translator's readings are not those of the casual reader, however well informed and engaged [but rather] develop in the context of a rewriting of the text in another language and culture" ("The Writer" 25). In a similar way, Wolfgang Lörcher maintains that "the translator's reception of the SL text is largely controlled by his/her activity as translator ... S/he does not receive and process the SL text in a vacuum, but with a view to translating it" (13). The same argument about the translator's inability to adopt the 'unbiased' position of an *ordinary* reader but to be bound to read the text 'differently' in anticipation of the stage of writing is also brought forward by Hans G. Hömig and Paul Kußmaul:

¹⁰¹ The description of translation as "an 'intensive reading' of the original text" (Barnstone 7) or as an "intelligent reading followed by [a] competent writing" (Déjean Le Féal 237) are arguably equally difficult to decipher.

On the one hand [the translator] understands the text as a translator while on the other he attempts to simulate the understanding of an ‘ordinary’ addressee. ... Simulating a ‘typical’ addressee is naturally in itself problematic as it presupposes that the translator is capable of taking the addressee’s place. That is nearly impossible as his interest in the text is fundamentally different than that of the “actual addressee”; he stands – seen in communicative terms - in a different relation to the sender and since it is the relation between sender and receiver that creates the meaning of the text, the text cannot but have a different meaning for him ... It is therefore not that the translator understands the text and then translates it but rather that he understands it as a translator] [my translation] (25-26).¹⁰²

Despite the fact that these opposing views offer equally convincing arguments for and against reading as a process that acquires unique characteristics when performed within the framework of the translation activity, there seem to be several interesting points in both approaches that need to be pointed out. In the interest of creating a common base of reference, it seems unavoidable to begin by attempting to demarcate what might constitute an *ordinary* reading of a literary text. In her work *The Reader, the Text, the Poem: The Transactional Theory of the Literary Work*, Louise M. Rosenblatt offers a description that appears to be suitably close to what might be considered an *ordinary* reading in the case of literature. According to Rosenblatt, an *ordinary* reader reading a novel or a poem performs an “aesthetic reading”, in other words a reading where one’s “attention is centered directly to what he is living through during his relationship with that particular text” (25). In opposition to the *aesthetic* reading Rosenblatt sets the notion of an “efferent reading” which she likens to that of “the mathematician reading his equations [or] the physicist pondering over his formulae” (ibid. 25). In the latter case the readers’ attention is focused not “on decipher[ing] the images or concepts or assertions ... the associations, feelings, attitudes,

¹⁰² The abstract reads in the original German: “[Der Übersetzer] einerseits versteht ... den Text als Übersetzer, andererseits versucht er, das Verständnis eines ‘normalen’ Adressaten zu simulieren. ... Dieses Simulieren eines ‘typischen’ Adressaten ist natürlich an sich schon problematisch, denn es setzt voraus, daß der Übersetzer den Platz des eigentlichen Adressaten einnehmen kann. Das ist jedoch schlecht möglich, denn sein Interesse an dem Text ist grundsätzlich anders als das des “eigentlichen Adressaten”, er steht – kommunikativ gesehen – in einem anderen Verhältnis zum Sender, und da dieses Verhältnis zwischen Sender und Empfänger eigentlich erst die Bedeutung eines Textes schafft, muß der Text für ihn notwendigerweise eine andere Bedeutung haben. ... Es ist also nicht so, daß der Übersetzer den Text zuerst versteht, und dann übersetzt, sondern er versteht ihn als Übersetzer”

and ideas that [the] words and their referents arouse within [them]” but rather “on the concepts, the solutions, to ‘be carried away’ from [their] reading“ (ibid. 24-25). In a similar manner Shreve et al attribute roughly the same features both to a general reader and to a non-general reader arguing that the former “is trying to extract information from the text and to respond to it in various ways (agreeing, disagreeing, replying, contradicting)” whereas the latter’s “orientation would not preclude agreeing, replying, contradicting and other reader attitudes but [would also] include other concerns” (27).

It seems, therefore, that we can distinguish between two types of reading. On the one hand there is reading as an enthralling experience operating unburdened by space and time limitations or by expectations of later use or application and allowing the readers to “surrender [and] transgress from the trace of the other ... in the closest places of the self” (Spivak 398), to “replace [their] perception of reality by the words of a book” (Poulet 55), to be “carried away by the reading [unable to] control the muscles of their faces ... to control their movements ... to sit still” (Stanislavski, *Creating a Role* 5). On the other hand, there is a more conditional type of reading that, although not necessarily exclusive of physical and spiritual absorption or captivation, seeks to fulfil required rather than expected aims and therefore needs and allows room for an additional layer of cognitive operations to be performed. By virtue of an example, one could imagine a student reading one of Chekhov's plays in one case during his or her holidays lying on the beach and in another on a school night preparing him- or herself for the upcoming exams or trying to write an essay on one of the play's characters. Despite the fact that the particular example is arguably reducing Rosenblatt's *aesthetic* and *efferent* types of reading to respectively ‘reading for pleasure’ and ‘reading for business’, the fact remains that whereas the former experience presents itself permanently unaltered, the latter one acquires its particular form only under certain circumstances. It is in that sense that one could consider Rosenblatt's *aesthetic*

reading to be synonymous with *ordinary* and her *effluent* reading with *extraordinary* or, better put, *exceptional*.

Examining within the particular understanding of *ordinary* and *exceptional* reading the aforementioned opposing views on the translator's state when reading the ST, one could argue that Déjean Le Féal's and Delisle's approach, which points to a type of reading that theoretically takes place undistracted from the writing and/or other *concerns*, as Shreve et al eloquently put it, does not seem to take into account that reading for translation is not an *ordinary* but an *exceptional* case. Regardless of whether the reading of the text is being performed in a vertical or a horizontal manner, the translators/readers are associated with the text in a particular way only under particular circumstances.

On the other hand, although the uniqueness of the translator's relation as a reader with the ST is highlighted by Lörscher and Hönig/Kußmaul, the weak link in their chain of thought appears to be that their argumentation rests upon the translators' awareness that they will be translating the given ST, in other words that they are required to follow a particular instruction and therefore perform a certain type of reading. This awareness becomes clearly evident in the comment of one of the students who participated in Hönig and Kußmaul's experiment. When asked whether she liked the text that was given to her for translation, the student replied: "It's not about whether I like the text or whether I would like to read it but rather that **I have to translate it**" [my emphasis] (26).¹⁰³ Granted, however, that translators are not genetically predisposed to translate either on paper or in their minds any text that falls into their hands, one can assume that by changing the instruction, the type of reading they perform would also change. Although the study by Shreve et al shows that there is hardly any difference between the reading time needed for translation and that required for comprehension, the fact remains that in spite of their

¹⁰³ The student's reply reads in the original German: "Hier ja nicht darum geht, ob mir der Text gefällt und ob ich ihn gerne lese, sondern darum, daß ich ihn übersetzen muß".

quality as translators, the experiment's participants were able to perform a different, *normal* reading after all upon being asked to do so. Considering this, one could consequently argue that it is not that translators cannot take an *ordinary* or *typical* addressee's place, as Hönig and Kußmaul suggest, but rather that they are not instructed to do so.

These problematic points in the reasoning of both approaches lead to a seemingly paradoxical conclusion: although translators are *ordinary* readers, translators translating are not. In other words, to the extent that translators manage to perform an *aesthetic* reading, they read the text oblivious of and consequently uninfluenced by the upcoming stage of the writing. Conversely, translators who give in to an *efferent* reading are more likely to have part of their attention focused on the stage of the writing. Returning to the question regarding the source text's influence on the interaction between the translators' reading and writing, one could consequently argue that it probably lies in the type of reading the text itself is more likely to provoke or best facilitate. Accordingly, one could suggest that a finalised version of the ST, i.e. the OT itself or a finalised translation of the OT written either in the TL or in one of the translators' working languages, is more likely to enable an *aesthetic* reading as the text presents itself in an already completed, established version. The encumbering nature of a draft translation, on the other hand, will probably disrupt the translators' attention by reminding them that there is an additional purpose in reading the text and therefore provoke an *efferent* reading.

Returning to Stanislavsky's guidelines for reading mentioned at the beginning of this section, one could easily recognise his concern about actors being also susceptible to an *efferent* type of reading. As Stanislavsky points out, the reason why actors tend to read hurriedly the playtext once they get it in their hands for the first time is "not so much because [they] want to come to know the play but because [they] want to imagine [themselves] in some fat part or other" (*Creating a Role* 7). In order to allow the first

impressions of an *aesthetic* reading to “pass freely into the depths of an actor’s soul, into the wellspring of his nature” (ibid. 3) and to protect them against the performers’ inclination to devote part of their attention to the forthcoming portrayal of a particular aspect or character of the play, Stanislavsky not only underlined the ceremoniousness that should accompany the actors’ first contact with the playtext but also insisted that “in the beginning [actors should] read ... both their own lines and those of the others who play opposite them” (*Building a Character* 112).

Summarising our discussion so far, one could argue that at first glance reading appears to hold a similar place in the creative process followed respectively by translators and Stanislavsky’s actors: for both groups reading signals the beginning of their assignment; both function necessarily first as readers as they need to “read in order to produce, [and to] decode in order to re-encode” (Hatim, 224); both are susceptible to the second half of this recycling activity, that is writing in the case of translators and acting in the case of actors; and finally, insofar as “the meaning understood in reading is not [only] linguistic, but [also] a curious hybrid of semantic and imagistic elements ... entertained in silence” (Cook 145), both are able to share the same experience when reading a playtext.

It is in the latter point, however, that some problems arise. As we saw earlier, the multiplicity of potential source texts that translators are likely to be working from leads them inevitably to adopt different reading strategies, which in turn compromise their ability to access the playtext initially as Stanislavsky wants his actors to, that is as *ordinary* readers. Having said that, however, one can also clearly identify the weakness in Stanislavsky’s approach to the process of reading: in order to be able to develop and maintain a constant way of reading the playwright’s creation, actors too need to be presented with a particular type of playtext, namely a finalised one. Although conventional theatre practice would suggest that this is mostly the case, one cannot fail to consider that the final playtext

may also emerge, for example, out of the performers' improvisations on a translator's literal translation, in which case one would expect actors to experience in their reading the same difficulties translators do when confronted with a non-finalised version of the playtext.

III.2. Studying the External Circumstances

Having read the playwright's creation, Stanislavsky's actors enter the first stage of *the period of study*, which is devoted to the study of the outer, visible form of the play. Stanislavsky terms this particular stage "studying the external circumstances" (*Creating a Role* 12). Arguing that the actor needs to move "from the periphery to the centre, from the external literal form of the play to its spiritual essence" (ibid. 12), Stanislavsky names four distinct sources actors need to draw from in order to put together the play's and its characters' external circumstances.

On the surface of each play lies the "external plane of facts, events, plots [and] form" stretching from the characters' past, through their present and into their future (ibid. 11). Since the playwright "omits what has happened to his characters while they have been in the wings, and what makes them act as they do when they return to the stage" (Stanislavsky, *An Actor Prepares* 257), it is not possible to grasp and absorb at once the sequence, interrelationship and interdependence between all the facts of the play. In order to be able to re-create this "unbroken line" of events (ibid. 256), Stanislavsky argued that his actors should first "learn by heart and write down" all actions mentioned implicitly or explicitly in the play so that not even the "tiniest circumstance [should] remain unnoticed, unappreciated, forgotten, or hang in the air" (*Creating a Role* 13).¹⁰⁴ Creating such a solid basis of reference will help them not only to orient themselves in relation to the facts of the play and "fill out what [the playwright] leaves unsaid" (Stanislavsky, *An Actor Prepares* 357) but also, as their experience with it grows and their analysis of it deepens, to identify more clearly how the psychological or "inner chain of circumstances" unfolds (ibid. 64).

¹⁰⁴ Considering Stanislavsky's insistence on the actors mastering the facts of the play, their sequence and their connection with one another, one could perhaps recognise Aristotle's own characterisation of tragedy as not being a string of unconnected speeches, since this "will not produce the essential tragic effect", but having a tightly "plot and artistically constructed incidents" (Butcher 27).

One level beneath the outer shell the actor finds what Stanislavsky termed “the plane of social situation” (*Creating a Role* 11). Considering that the characters’ actions or the play’s events may have been influenced or caused by the particular social, cultural or historical setting of the play, it is necessary for the actors to understand the determining role these conditions played in the development of the plot by looking “not only in the actual text but also in a variety of commentaries, pieces of literature, historical writings concerning the period, and so forth” (ibid. 17).

The next source an actor needs to use is the “literary plane, with its ideas, its style, and other aspects” (ibid. 11). Although Stanislavsky acknowledges that for the full appreciation of the “style of writing, the formulation in words, the verse” (ibid. 17) additional experience is required, he asks his actors to observe and compare the playwright’s language, the characterisations of the dramatic figures and the way the play’s logic unwinds with other writings of the particular period. It should be noted that the actors’ work on the literary aspect of the play is not aimed at producing a scholarly critique of the play but rather at creating an impression of the writing, at providing the performers with an additional sense of the play’s atmosphere.

The last external parameter actors need to take into consideration is the “aesthetic plane, with the sublayers of all that is theatrical, artistic, having to do with scenery and production” (ibid. 11). During the particular stage the actor should not only note what the playwright reports on “the scene, the setting, the position of rooms, architecture, lighting, groupings, gestures, manners” but also pay close attention to the director’s and the scenographer’s comments and suggestions on these features as it is according to the latter that the play’s visual imprint will be established (ibid. 18). Again the actors’ study should not be limited to the places where the characters’ actions take place in the present but also in the past and in the future.

The four levels Stanislavsky chooses to focus his actors' attention on in order to uncover "the text's informational wealth" (Batsalia 48) do not appear to lie outside the drama translators' considerations when performing what Pavis describes as a "*macrotextual* translation, that is, a dramaturgical analysis of the fiction conveyed by the text" that will enable them to "reconstitute the plot according to the logic that appears to suit the action, ... the system of characters, the time and space [, and] the individual traits of each character" when transferring the playwright's creation from one language into another ("Problems of Translation" 27). Upon closer observation, however, we will see that there are differences to be found after all in the way Stanislavsky's actors and translators explore the particular aspects of the play. To illustrate this we will begin with the analysis of the first of the four levels of external circumstances that Stanislavsky wants his actors to explore during the particular stage of their creative process, that is the "level of facts; what happens, the events, incidents which constitute the external action and give life to the characters' emotions and states of feelings" (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: An Introduction* 45). To help us, we will be using part of the opening scene from Ibsen's play *A Doll's House* as Michael Meyer translated it in 1965:

"A bell rings in the hall outside. After a moment we hear the front door being opened. NORA enters the room, humming contentedly to herself. She is wearing outdoor clothes and carrying a lot of parcels, which she puts down on the table right. She leaves the door to the hall open; through it we can see the PORTER carrying a Christmas tree and a basket. He gives these to the MAID, who has opened the door for them.

NORA. Hide that Christmas tree away, Helen. The children mustn't see it before I've decorated it this evening. (*To the PORTER, taking out her purse*) How much - ?

PORTER. A shilling.

NORA. Here's half a crown. No, keep it.

The PORTER touches his cap and goes. NORA closes the door". (23)

Analysing the scene from Ibsen's play, one could argue that it can be divided into

the following events or actions:

1. It is Christmas Eve in the afternoon.
2. Nora returns home from the market where she bought a Christmas tree and presents.
3. A porter helps Nora with her parcels.
4. The maid, Helen, opens the door.
5. Nora places the presents on a table.
6. The porter hands the tree and a basket over to the maid.
7. Nora asks Helen to hide the tree from the children.
8. Nora takes out her purse and asks the porter how much he wants for his service.
9. The porter replies.
10. Nora pays the porter more money than he asked for.
11. The porter reacts silently in surprise.
12. Nora reassures him that he can keep the entire amount she is giving him.
13. The porter leaves.
14. Nora closes the door.

By observing the fourteen points that constitute the external plane of facts and actions of the particular part of Act I of the play, one can clearly see that they include not only physical but also verbal actions. As Manfred Pfister points out,

“Since dramatic dialogue is spoken action, each individual dramatic utterance does not just consist in its propositional expressive content alone, but also in the way it is itself the execution of an act – whether in the form of a promise, a threat or an act of persuasion etc. Therefore, the performative aspect described by speech-act theory is always present in dramatic dialogue” (6).

The theory of speech acts was brought forward by the English philosopher John Austin in a series of lectures he delivered at Harvard University in 1955. According to Austin, utterances can be divided into two groups: “constatives”, which convey

information, and “performatives”, which also perform the actions they appear to be merely describing (6). In the utterance “I now pronounce you man and wife”, for example, it is the words themselves that perform the action of joining the couple in wedlock. Recognising, however, that performatives are also capable of conveying information, just as constatives are respectively able to perform actions by having an effect on the listener, Austin went on to propose the analysis of all verbal actions, or speech acts, on three levels (94-107): the locutionary, i.e. what is said; the illocutionary, i.e. what is being done *in* the saying of it; and finally the perlocutionary, i.e. the effect the speaker has on the listener *by* or *through* the saying of it. In his work *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*, John R. Searle broke Austin’s locutionary level further into two classes, namely the utterance act and the propositional act (24-25). As Elam explains, the former refers to “the physical production of morphemes and sentences” and the latter concerns the act “of referring and predicating” (158). Searle classified utterances according to their illocutionary force in the following manner:

1. Assertives, whose aim is to “commit the speaker ... to something’s being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition”, such as in the case of boasting, complaining, concluding, deducing, and describing.
2. Directives, by which the speaker “attempts to get the hearer to do something”, such as in the case of asking, ordering, commanding, requesting, begging, pleading, praying, inviting, permitting, and advising.
3. Commissives, which “commit the speaker to some future action”, such as in the case of promising.
4. Expressives, which are used to “to express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content”, such as in the case of thanking, congratulating, apologising, condoling, deploring, and welcoming

5. Declaratives, which have a declarational function (12-20).¹⁰⁵

Returning to Ibsen's play and focusing our attention on the character of the porter, for example, we see that his brief presence on the stage consists of four sequential, physical actions – his entrance, his interaction with the maid, his transaction with Nora and finally his exit – but also of four verbal actions – the utterance act of producing a sentence, the propositional act of referring to a shilling, the directive illocutionary act of requesting a shilling for his services, and the perlocutionary act of attempting to persuade Nora to pay him one shilling. The characters' actions, however, are not always verbalised. The porter's reaction to Nora's generosity, for example, is silent. Nor are all of a play's actions always to be found in the play's "main text" or in its "side text", which Roman Ingarden defined respectively as "the words spoken by the represented persons" and the "information given by the author for the production of the work" (377). Offering a description of the possible ways an action or an event may take place, Volker Klotz distinguishes between "offene und geschlossene Handlung" (30) or, as it reads in Pfister's translation, "open and hidden action" (204). According to Klotz, an *open action* is directly visible by the audience whereas a *hidden action* is to be understood as "everything that happens during the dramatic course of events that is not directly visible but takes place off-stage" (30). This means that one could consequently further distinguish between a "spatially hidden action that takes place off-stage at the same time as the action on-stage" and a "temporally hidden action that takes place in periods omitted between various scenes and acts" (Pfister 204).

Considering that the previously listed fourteen facts of Act I constitute only "the present tense of the play" and that, according to Stanislavsky, the actor should establish "a direct connection between the present tense of a role with its past and its future" (*Creating*

¹⁰⁵ In his work Austin offered also a taxonomy of illocutionary speech acts (150) but according to Elam, Searle's classification is more "directly useful for purposes of dramatic analysis" (166).

a Role 16), one could argue that an analysis of the events of the extract from Ibsen's play should also include, for example, the actions that preceded the explicit appearance of the silent character of the maid, i.e. where she was and what she did before opening the door, as well as those that followed her implicit disappearance from the stage, i.e. where she went and what she did from the moment Nora instructed her to hide the tree up until the moment she re-appears on the stage later in Act I, this time in voice, announcing the arrival of the character of Mrs. Linde.

These four types of actions, i.e. open, hidden, verbal, and physical actions, are not only interrelated but also interdependent. Nora's spatiotemporally-open physical act of paying the porter, for example, was caused by the latter's directive illocutionary act of requesting to be paid for the spatiotemporally hidden physical act of carrying the tree and the presents, which in turn was, presumably, the product of Nora's spatiotemporally hidden directive illocutionary act of asking him to help her with what she had bought at the market followed by the spatiotemporally hidden commissive illocutionary act of promising to pay him once they get home etc. The interconnection between all these acts is arguably the *unbroken line* of events that Stanislavsky wants his actors to discover through their analysis of the level of facts. What needs to be noticed, however, is that although when working on the original text the actors seek to follow the *unbroken line* as provided by the playwright, when working on a translation their analysis cannot but depend, at least partly, on the way this *line* was *reconstituted* by the translator.

Discussing the way verbal actions are transferred from one language into another, Hatim and Mason argue that "over and above the referential meaning of individual elements, the translator will seek to relay the illocutionary force of each speech act in turn" (61). Peter Fawcett brings forward a similar suggestion maintaining that "If I were to be translating a novel that contained the phrase *Can you lend me 100yen*, I would not make a

precise calculation from the current exchange rate ... because what matters is not the precise sum but the act of asking for financial assistance” (9). As we saw in Ros Schwartz’s case, however, which was discussed in the introductory chapter on drama translation, a translator might substitute a verbal act for a physical act. Accordingly, considering the translators’ option to acculturate the codes that inform the source culture, one could argue that they can opt for maintaining the illocutionary act of the utterance but change its propositional act. Whereas, for example, William Archer (Ibsen, *A Doll’s House*), Peter Watts (Ibsen, *The League* 147) and McFarlane/Arup (Ibsen, *Four Major Plays* 201) in their English translation as well as Marie von Borch (Ibsen, *Ein Puppenheim* 1) and Richard Linder (Ibsen, *Nora* 5) in their German translation of Ibsen’s play chose to keep the Norwegian monetary system by having the porter requesting *fifty øre* and Nora paying him *a crown*, in the 2001 translation published by the Pennsylvania State University we read that the porter asks for a *sixpence* and receives *a shilling*. In his translation, on the other hand, Meyer (23), which Egil Törnqvist also uses for his own dramaturgical analysis of the play in his work *Transposing Drama: Studies in Representation* (69), the porter asks for *a shilling* and Nora pays him *half a crown*.

What needs to be noticed is that despite the variety of combinations of the British pound’s subdivisions the translators of the latter two versions used in order to transplant the exchange into the Anglo-Saxon reality, in all of the six translations mentioned above the ratio between the amount asked for by the porter and that actually paid by Nora is the same as in Ibsen’s play, in other words 1:2. In the 1994 corrected edition of Meyer’s translation published by the Methuen Student Editions series, however, that ratio inflated to 1:20 as one reads that although the porter asks for *a shilling*, he receives no less than *a pound* for his service (23). By paying more attention to the *act of asking* than to the *sum* asked for, the editors of Meyer’s translation raised the porter’s tip from 100% to 2000%.

Although the use of *pound* was probably thought as a way in which Meyer's outdated *half a crown* could be modernised, this change in the propositional act embedded in Nora's utterance affects automatically not only the physical re-action of the porter but also every verbal and physical act of the play related in any way with money. As was pointed out, however, the Stanislavskian actors' analysis of the play's events depends only partly on the translator's *reconstitution* of the *unbroken line* of events. Their exploration of the characters' spatiotemporally hidden actions, for example, may take place independently. To illustrate this let us consider the narratively mediated events of the elopement of Desdemona and her marriage to Othello, embedded in the latter's declarative utterances in lines 79-80 from Act I sc. iii in Shakespeare's *Othello* that Stanislavsky also uses in his work (*Creating a Role* 158):

“Most potent, grave, and reverend signors,
My very noble and approved good masters;
That I have ta'en this old man's daughter,
It is most true; true I have married her-” (lines 77-80)

Although the verb that the translator will choose to use for the reformulation of the events in the target language is undoubtedly of significance for Stanislavsky's actors, as that too will reveal something about the character and his actions, what is of equal importance for them is to acquire a clear picture of the details of the events themselves from as many standpoints as possible; to “give [the play's] character[s] a memory” of the event itself, as J. L. Styan puts it (16). Shakespeare provides the reader with at least one image of the event when Roderigo in Act I sc. i informs Brabantio that Desdemona was “transported with no worse nor better guard/ but with a knave of common hire, a gondolier/

to the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor” (lines 123-125).¹⁰⁶ According to Stanislavsky, however, the actors’ exploration of the particular events should not be limited only to “the angle of the initiator of the crime – Othello – [and] that of Desdemona, the heroine of the love story” but should also include “the point of view of [all] the injured and affronted parties” (*Creating a Role* 159). This means that in the case of Constantin Treplev’s spatiotemporally hidden attempted suicide between Acts II and III in Chekhov’s *The Seagull*, for example, it would be the actor’s job not only to imagine how Constantin had to “make up his mind to go over to the table, take the key from his pocket, open the drawer, take out the revolver, load it and put a bullet through his head” but also to figure out in similar detail where were both the major and the minor characters of the play, such as the chef and the housemaid, and what they were doing while he was getting prepared to take his own life as well as what they did after the shot was fired (Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares* 121).

Seen from a translational perspective, however, there seems to be no apparent reason why translators should have an interest in mapping out in such a meticulous manner the actions and events of all of a play’s characters, particularly if they do not interfere with the *reconstitution* of the *unbroken line* of play’s events. As readers they are aware that the maid ‘disappears’ from the stage after having hidden the presents as Nora instructs her to do and that Desdemona was transferred by sea to a prearranged destination where she would marry Othello in secret. Yet even if knowing what preceded or followed these events could be argued to be of significance for the translator, figuring out what Ibsen’s porter did before being employed by Nora as well as after he received her generous tip is something that appears to be of interest only to the actor who will portray him. And as we will see in the chapters to follow, drama translators have more than a single role to play in the theatre.

¹⁰⁶ This was also the opening scene of the 1996 Lawrence Fishburne/Kenneth Branagh video version of the play.

Stanislavsky uses the same passage from *Othello* to discuss the second level of the external circumstances an actor needs to explore, i.e. the way the characters' "external action is determined by social and historical circumstance" (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: An Introduction* 45). To that end, Stanislavsky focuses his pupils' attention on Othello's last line:

"Now tell me, who married [Othello and Desdemona], where, in what church? Was it a Catholic church? Or because Othello is a Muslim was there no Christian priest to be found who would marry them? If that is so, to what ceremony would Othello give the name of marriage? Or was it a common-law marriage? For those times that would have been perhaps too bold, too brazen" (*Creating a Role* 159).

Despite the objections one might raise to Stanislavsky's understanding of Othello as a Muslim and not as a converted Christian as well as to his doubts about the popularity of common-law marriages in Shakespeare's time, one should keep in mind that Stanislavsky's aim at this point is neither to offer a proper dramaturgical analysis nor to present a fact-based historical report. It is rather to sensitise his pupils to the social dimension of the characters' life and actions, in the particular case to the way religion could have shaped the past of Othello's character.¹⁰⁷ Of similar importance in terms of the play's social level is also Othello's second line where he addresses the Senators as his *masters*, another point that Stanislavsky turns his actors' attention to.

"Tell me, what is the service Othello is engaged in? ... What is the relationship between him and [the Senators]? ... Is he, in our parlance, a kind of minister of war, and are they a council of ministers, or is he simply a mercenary soldier, and are they plenipotentiary governors who make all the binding decisions in the country?" (ibid. 158).

¹⁰⁷ In both Orson Wells's and Oliver Parker's film version of the play, Roderigo and Iago secretly watch Othello and Desdemona getting married in a Christian church. In Parker's version, Cassio appears to act as the best man or witness of the ceremony whereas Wells showed only the married couple kneeling in front of the priest and exiting the church.

Setting aside yet again the historical accuracy of Stanislavsky's understanding of Venice's power structure, what he is arguably trying to illustrate to his pupils is that the exploration of the socio-historical conditions within which the play's characters operate will provide them with an additional tool for interpreting later their thoughts, decisions, actions and reactions.

Acquiring an understanding of "the social, historical, theatrical and critical contexts of the play" is of equal importance for the drama translator (Marsh, "Whose Text Is It Anyway" 138). As Jirí Levý points out, the translator, as a mediator between different cultures and epochs, needs to "familiarise himself with the existing conditions of the milieu from which he translates ... to recognise directly the realities embedded in the work and ... to be able to reconstruct their reflection" (44).¹⁰⁸ In a similar manner Horst Frenz argues that the translator "must be sensitive to the mythological, historical, and social traditions reflected in a language" (94) and Rainer Kohlmayer narrates how impressed he was to find out that "Middle High German texts [are] not simply texts from another time but from *another reality*" ("Das Theater" 192).¹⁰⁹ The translators' ability to identify the social, historical and cultural attributes of the ST and to diagnose which of those might pose a problem for the presentation of the particular reality to the target culture receivers is evident in a rich variety of examples. In his article "The Play: A Gateway to Cultural Dialogue", for instance, Gershon Shaked discusses the difficulties of bridging the religious gaps between various cultures such as the translation "of the ceremony of the Mass into Hebrew for an audience ... for whom the notion that bread and wine are transubstantiated into the flesh and blood of the Son of God is rather strange" (9). Exploring Victor Cilincă's political farce *Polonius* from a sociolinguistic perspective, Petru Iamandi argues that some

¹⁰⁸ The abstract reads in the original German: "Der Übersetzer solle sich mit den Gegebenheiten des Milieus, aus dem er übersetzt, bekannt machen ... die im Werk enthaltenden Realitäten unmittelbar erkenn[en] und ... daher deren Widerspiegelung ... rekonstruieren [können]".

¹⁰⁹ The quotation reads in the original German: "... mittelhochdeutsche Texte nicht einfach aus anderen Zeiten sind, sondern aus *anderen Wirklichkeiten*"

of the characters' descriptions, such as working as "a *committee boy*" (175), being "a renowned *people's actor*" (176) or "having a *good file*" (177), will probably not resonate with the play's recipients who have not lived under a totalitarian regime such as Ceaușescu's in Romania. For Sharon D. King, on the other hand, it is the title "The apple pie and the chocolate cake" that is likely to place the much lighter French farce *Le pâté et la tarte* out of historical-cultural context for its receivers as, according to the scholar, "chocolate in any form was not a sixteenth-century French reality, much less a lower-middle-class one" (57). Jiří Josek suggests that "Samson's biting his thumb [as] a contemporary gesture of contempt" in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* needs to be changed into "spit[ting] in front of Capulet's servants" in order for today's Czech audience to comprehend the insult (87) and Jane Lai points out that however familiar the Chinese audience might be with "the virtue of loyalty to [an] absolute monarch", it will probably be taken aback by "[King] Lear's idea of abdication from the responsibilities of kingship without abandoning its claims", an action which as far as the Chinese history and culture is concerned "occurred only in ... myths" (146).

The foregoing remarks are indicative of the social and historical distances a translator needs to cover when transferring plays from one culture into another. Considering how Stanislavsky attempted earlier to decode *Othello*'s social aspect, one could suggest that, in a similar manner to translators, his actors are also involved in a rendering process trying "to translate differences to [their] own world of experience, to bring the distant near, make the past present, and the incomprehensible understood" (Shaked 13). Despite the fact that he uses information from both the play's sending and receiving ends, what needs to be noticed is that his attention is firmly focused not on understanding socio-historically the source culture or on predicting the reaction of the target culture but rather on decoding the 'host culture', i.e. the play's fictional world which

he considers a separate entity, a *tertium quid*. Considering that with every shift in time and/or space, the socio-historical conditions of the play's reality cannot but also change, one therefore could argue that from the Stanislavskian actor's perspective the fact that the action in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, is set respectively in Denmark and Italy, is more important than that the plays were written in England. In a corresponding manner, what matters arguably more for Stanislavsky's actors as far as Edmond Rostand's play *Cyrano de Bergerac* is concerned is not that it was written in 1897 France but rather that its action takes place in France two and a half centuries earlier, between 1640 and 1655. That is not to say, of course, that translators are not aware of the fact that the play's social or historical context may differ from that of the source culture. On the contrary, as the majority of Jānis's interviewees rightfully and in complete alignment with Stanislavsky's reasoning point out, it is important from a translational perspective not only "to know about the time and place in which the play was written" but also about "the historical situation at the time [and place] the events of the play take place" (349). Cynthia Marsh, for example, points out that although Maxim Gorky's play *Egor Bulychev* was written in Stalin's Communist Russia of 1932 its action takes place "in February 1917, the time of the first Russian revolution ... coinciding with the overthrow of the government and the abdication and arrest of the Tsar" ("Whose Text Is It Anyway" 140). According to Marsh, Gorky emphasised this 15-year gap in a variety of ways such as choosing for his main character "a deliberately non-European form of the name Georgii" and by inserting in the text open references and quotations from the Bible which "in pre-revolutionary Russian theatre [were] not allowed" (ibid. 141).

However, not all plays are set in a specific spatiotemporal setting. The action in Eugène Ionesco's play *The Chairs* or in Luigi Pirandello's work *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, for example, is set outside the notions of historical time and place.

Furthermore, even if the play's action takes place in a particular time and space that does not mean that this spatiotemporal framework will be maintained in the target version. Upon decision or request, the translator may also change either the entire spatiotemporal setting of the play or one of these two dimensions by using, for example, a particular dialect, which would place the play's "action in a more locally-rooted geographic, social and linguistic context" (Findlay, "Translating Standard" 37). Louis Nowra, for instance, argues that for his adaptations of Frank Wedekind's plays *Earth Spirit* and *Pandora's Box*, which did not provide in their original form a conventional historical setting within which the female protagonist, Lulu, is to be imagined, he decided to place her "in the Weimar Republic ... contrasting and comparing her with morality of the times" in an attempt to "to give her surroundings an extra resonance [and to] having her 'fleshed out' by constant juxtaposition" (17). In a similar way Thomas Kilroy transferred Chekhov's play *The Seagull* "from an unspecific place in Southern Russia to a concrete setting in Ireland" setting the action "on the Desmond estate in the West of Ireland in the latter part of the 19th century" (qtd. in Kosok 108) and Liz Lochhead translated Moliere's *Tartuffe* from French into a "theatrical Scots, full of anachronisms, demotic speech from various eras and areas" (qtd. in Findlay, "Translating into Dialect" 202). Such "intersections", as Sirkku Aaltonen defines the case of a translation foregrounding "a particular aspect of [the ST] by changing the order of the scenes, some of the characters or the setting" ("Translating Plays" 89), inevitably maintain the actors' dependency on the translators' choices on the exploration of the play's social level as well. Noel Clark's translation of Aleksandr Count Fredro's play *Revenge* may serve as an example of such a case.

"Some of the characters in *Revenge* were referred to by already obsolete hereditary court titles, e.g. Czesnik (Cup-bearer) once responsible for serving the King at the table; Rejent (Notary), originally a leading official at the Bar. So, for ease of comprehension as well as scansion, I decided to suggest the pre-eminence of the Cupbearer among the local

landed gentry by calling him Squire. Similarly, I downgraded the Rejent by simply calling him a Notary” (27).

Regardless of the rhyming problems that might have arisen were Clark not to have used *notary* and *squire* in his translation, one cannot fail to notice how the rank shift he imposed on the *czesnik* and the *rejent* are likely to affect an actor’s analysis of the particular characters’ social position and consequently their actions in the play’s fictional world. Although, for example, a *squire* as a servant entails the notion of providing service to someone who is higher in the hierarchy, which means that he could easily be imagined acting as a *cupbearer* and pouring the King a glass of wine, his position would not exclude other duties as well, such as polishing or caring for the King’s personal objects, for example.¹¹⁰ A similar intervention yet not on the characters’ status but on their education, another aspect of the play’s social level, is to be found in Václav Havel’s play *The Garden Party* when the characters of the Director and the Secretary quote verses from the Czech poets Fráňa Šrámek and Viktor Dyk. In the TL text these verses were partly substituted with verses from Shakespeare’s Sonnets and his play *The Winter’s Tale*. According to Jiří Rambousek, the problem with the translator’s particular decision is not that the Bard’s lines were not a “suitable equivalent of the original Czech lines” but rather that they make the Director who is “a young communist activist [...] sound a bit too intellectual”. “Shakespeare”, Rambousek continues, “is certainly known in the Czech culture but hardly quoted by a young Party member” (162).

As was the case in the study described earlier on the level of facts, however, an actor’s analysis depends only partly on the translator’s choices. According to Stanislavsky,

¹¹⁰ Furthermore, if further explanation is not provided, an actor who is not familiar with the medieval British understanding of the term could confuse it with the much later American one, which denotes someone licensed to practice law. In that case the character would not only irretrievably lose any connection he could have had with a *cupbearer* but also erroneously appear to have a particular relationship with the *notary*, i.e. with someone authorised to perform legal formalities.

actors should not confine their exploration of the social and historical level only to the highly visible characteristics of the play's milieu but should try to ferret out information about the life in the play by examining details that at first glance could go unnoticed or appear to be insignificant. In his analysis of Alexandr Griboyedov's play *Woe from Wit*, for example, Stanislavsky argues that one of the socio-historical questions an actor has to ask about the character of Chatski, who returns home after a long journey abroad, is "what does it mean to come home in those days, travelling by coaches with relays of horses" (*Creating a Role* 17). The following short description of the conditions of travelling in past centuries may serve as an example of what he was probably aiming to have his actors discover:

"In the earlier 18th century ... the speediest coach journey between London and Cambridge (just 60 miles) took at least a day. Travelling from the capital to the town of Shrewsbury by coach took more than three days, and the journey to Edinburgh could last as long as 10 days. Some travellers made their wills before starting, as coaches easily overturned on bad roads or in swollen rivers" (United Kingdom).

Although the conception of travelling as a time-consuming, physically strenuous and hazardous process is arguably predictable when imagining a long journey taking place two or three centuries ago, the fact that those about to undertake it wrote down their testament before embarking on it presents the notion of danger in its real dimension through an extremely powerful image. Moreover, considering the case of their safe arrival at their destination, one can assume that travellers had to deal for a second time with the particular document in order to destroy, redraft or simply store it. Having knowledge of that ritual could help Stanislavsky's actors not only to acquire a better understanding of the fear of travelling and the relief of arrival that either their own or one of the other characters of the play might be experiencing during a particular scene, but also to have at their disposal a series of actions they could infuse into their characters' on- or off-stage existence.

Considering how easily such a rich source of inspiration could have escaped their attention, it becomes clear why Stanislavsky wants his actors to be on the alert for similar hints when examining the social and historical level of the text. As far as translators are concerned, one cannot but assume, judging from the information they bring forward in their accounts, that they are as attentive to the way the social and historical setting of the play is likely to influence the characters' everyday reality in the work's fictional world as Stanislavsky wants his actors to be.

Next on Stanislavsky's list of external circumstances an actor needs to study is the literary level, in other words "the distinctive features of the author's style" (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: An Introduction* 45). As was mentioned earlier, Stanislavsky stressed two things to his pupils with regard to this particular stage. The first one was that for the exploration of the text's literary level additional experience and effort will be required. As Benedetti narrates, "writing to an aspiring young actor in 1901 [Stanislavsky] made no secret of the amount of reading and study the boy would have to undertake before he would be accepted for training or could begin to approach the major works of the contemporary repertoire" (ibid. 45). However strict Stanislavsky may have appeared to be in the particular incident, his rejection is arguably justified considering the high level of literary, scientific and general knowledge he demanded from his actors. Throughout his work Stanislavsky emphasised the importance of the actors' education and the wide range of aspects it should cover believing firmly that only knowledge can protect and nourish their skills and talent. According to his reasoning, it is extremely important for an actor to have an understanding of issues relating to diverse subjects such as ecology, sociology, technology, history and of course literature and certain aspects of linguistics ("On Various Trends" 104-105; *Creating a Role* 120). As far as the stage of the creative process under discussion here is concerned, one cannot but agree that without adequate literary experiences it would have been truly

impossible for the young actor to appreciate “the lightness of [the] verse, the sharpness of [the] rhythm, the aptness of [the] words ... the scenic quality of [the] action ... the originality of the playwright” of any given work, as Stanislavsky asks his pupils to do (Stanislavski, *Creating a Role* 17-18).

Turning our attention to the case of the translators, one would have to admit that the knowledge requirements they are asked to meet are not only equally high but also profoundly similar to those Stanislavsky sets for his actors. The five general fields within which translation problems usually occur, outlined by Eugene Nida in his article “Linguistics and Ethnology in Translation Problems”, may serve as an example of the nearly identical curriculum translators and actors share: “ecology, material culture, social culture, religious culture and linguistic culture” (91). Commenting on Nida’s categorisation, H. Stephen Straight concurs that these five areas constitute the broader field of “knowledge translators must have” (41).¹¹¹ Discussing in particular the area of linguistics, Straight divides it further into five sub-categories, namely:

- “1. Sound system (especially important for songs and poems, but also whenever rhyme, rhythm, or alliteration is present)
2. Word formation (especially important when ... markings of number, gender, tense etc., are to found in one language but not the other ...)
3. Word meanings (number of near-synonyms ... idiomatic and metaphorical expressions ...)
4. Syntactic relations (... conjunctions and other transition markers ...)
5. Pronouns” (ibid. 42).¹¹²

Comparing Straight’s detailed dissection of the text’s linguistic aspects a translator needs to be aware of to Stanislavsky’s far more general concerns with issues of “diction

¹¹¹ In his article Straight modified slightly the headings of Nida’s categories by adding next to material culture the field of “technology”, altering social culture to “social organization”, replacing religious culture with “mythic patterns” and finally changing social culture to “social structures” (42).

¹¹² Straight’s five categories correspond roughly to the four factors Nida argues that the differences between languages may best be treated, namely “phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical” (“Linguistics and Ethnology” 95).

and singing”, “intonation and pauses”, “accentuation” (chapters vii-ix in *Building a Character*) and “speech tempo-rhythm” (chapter xi in *Building a Character*), one could be led to argue that translators appear to be better prepared or at least in a more advantageous position to explore and evaluate the text’s literary plane than actors.

Stanislavsky’s second point to his actors, however, is likely to refute such a claim: an actor’s analysis of the text’s literary plane is not to be a technical or academic one. Without dismissing the ability of “literary theatres”, in other words theatres in “which the most powerful personality is ... the literary director”, to “spread knowledge [and] develop literary taste” (Stanislavski, “The Theatre” 171-174), Stanislavsky maintained that “the literary experts are not always competent in questions related specifically to our problems as actors and directors” (*Creating a Role* 120). The actors of the *theatre of experiencing* ought to always keep in mind, Stanislavsky concludes, that whereas the “result of a scholarly analysis is thought, the result of an artistic analysis is feeling” (ibid. 8). By invoking this notion of a double-layered filter being necessary for the exploration of the playwright’s creation as a “unique phenomenon”, as an “unprecedented and unrepeatable fusion of subject and personality and form” (Cecil 15), Stanislavsky appears to be tackling yet again the subject of reading, this time from a different angle. Having requested initially an *aesthetic* and subsequently an *effere*nt reading of the text, he is arguably attempting now to culminate the actor’s contact with the playwright’s text by calling for a third type of reading where the intellectual and the emotional appreciation of the playwright’s work co-exist simultaneously.

Stanislavsky is not alone in considering the fusion of emotions and intellect as a tool for approaching and evaluating an author’s work. In his article “Measuring the Appreciation of Literature”, Robert C. Pooley uses the same two elements for describing the notion of literary appreciation, which he defines “as the emotional responses which

arise from basic recognitions, enhanced by an apprehension of the means by which they are aroused” (628). In her article “Stages of Growth in Literary Appreciation”, Margaret J. Early elaborates on Pooley’s concept arguing that the developmental process of literary appreciation can be further broken down into three distinct phases. Interestingly enough, the way Stanislavsky has chosen to structure the actors’ progression from the first to the third type of reading appears to correspond directly to Early’s categorisation.

According to Early, the first phase is that of “the unconscious enjoyment” where “the reader knows what he likes but he does not know why” (163). Children, for example, argues Early, “respond with delight to ‘the gray, green, greasy Limpopo River’” (ibid. 163) that Rudyard Kipling refers to in his short story *The Elephant’s Child* without being able to identify, for example, the successive rolling R’s of the adjectives or the supposedly fictional name of the river as the reason of their amusement. The child’s enjoyment that is “inherent in the arrangement and order of the words” is what Pooley describes as *basic recognitions* (628). By addressing not their literary intellect but rather their literary instincts, it is in a rather similar manner that Stanislavsky attempts to trigger and captivate such spontaneous reactions in his actors through the first, *aesthetic* reading of the text.

During the second phase, which Early terms the “self-conscious appreciation”, the reader “gradually moves away from a simple interest in what happened [and] asks why [looking] for logical development of character [and being] willing to struggle for the artist’s meaning even through barriers of space and time” (164). Pooley similarly argues that “genuine growth in appreciation involves ... also the gradual growth of secondary responses arising from intellectual apprehension of the technical skill of the artist and the content of the selections” (629-630). Stanislavsky’s requested exploration of the level of facts and of the social level aims also at the latter part of Pooley’s suggestion, in other words at the conscious detection and apprehension of what lies hidden behind the

playwright's words.

The final phase of the process of literary appreciation, according to Early, is that of "conscious delight" (166). During the particular phase the reader knows why he or she reacts in a particular way to literature and relies on his or her own judgement deciding on their value. As Early points out, "to this end, in reading a work of great literature, [the reader] brings all his creative powers, the stream of his consciousness, all his living, all the ideas of mankind which have become his through previous reading" (ibid. 166). It is in much the same way that during the exploration of the text's literary level Stanislavsky asks his pupils to evaluate the missing bit of Pooley's earlier suggestion, i.e. the literary creator's technical skills, and to use the knowledge and experience they have gained both from their contact so far with the play at hand as well as with other literary works, in order to appreciate the playwright's work in its entirety.

Despite the admittedly convincing presentation of the appreciation of literature as a process gradually developing from a simple to a more complex form and unavoidably involving, to a lesser or greater degree, both the emotional enjoyment and the intellectual recognition of a work's qualities, Jerry L. Walker identifies two aspects of Early's and Pooley's common line of thought as problematic. The exploration of Walker's objections will enable us not only to distinguish between the way the phase of conscious delight functions in Early's and in Stanislavsky's case but also to discover how Stanislavsky's particular understanding of it relates to the translational reality of transferring texts from one language into another.

The first issue Walker brings forward concerns "the value judgement ... the concept [of] 'highest' and ... 'lowest levels' of appreciation" implies. Why is one's "appreciation for the classics", Walker questions, to be considered "of a higher order than [one's] appreciation for an occasional best seller" (1156). Setting aside whether or not Walker's

lack of conviction for the criteria used to assess the level of one's literary maturity is justified, what needs to be noticed here is that the system of evaluation he criticises appear to concern not an open-ended but rather a finite process; regardless of how many levels are to be found in between, what has a clear beginning as an unconscious enjoyment has also a clear end as a conscious delight. Therein lies also the difference between the role the stage of conscious delight plays in Early's developmental process of literary appreciation and in Stanislavsky's requested exploration of the text's literary level. As far as middle or high school students are concerned, who are Early's, Pooley's and Walker's case under discussion, reaching that final phase signals the peak and therefore in a way the end of their literary growth. For Stanislavsky's actors, however, the same notion of conscious delight is just another stage or, better put, a pause in their creative process. In other words, although Stanislavsky's pupils may in effect be following the steps leading readers to the enchantment of the literary creation, they switch from a microscopic to a panoramic view of the text not as a sign of their achieved literary maturity but rather in order to add another viewpoint to their approach to the play.

Stanislavsky's understanding of the study of the play's literary level as a pause in the actor's creative process may arguably be considered as a point of linkage between his actors and the literary or drama translators. A similar moment of brief hiatus of admiration of or reflection on the singularity of the author's creation where emotion and intellect operate jointly in order to leave a distinct imprint could be diagnosed in Noel Clark's account of his experience with Aleksander Fredo's play *Revenge*:

"My plan was to translate only from languages I knew well enough to read with pleasure and to choose only plays which made an immediate personal appeal ... I chose *Revenge* for several reasons. For one thing, the play made me laugh the first time I read it" (24-26).

Considering that Clark appears to be so impressed by the play's ability to make him laugh that he lists its humour first among the reasons that made him decide to translate the playwright's work, one could suggest that when he finished reading the text he probably admitted with a rather cathartic relief, either silently or openly, something along the lines of 'this is/was a good book'. Granted that this was indeed the case, it could consequently be argued that this private reviewing pause between reading and translating the play functioned in the manner Stanislavsky argues that the exploration of the literary level ought to: deriving from an appreciation of the playwright's style and talent, it implanted an impression in Clark, in this particular case one of lively amusement, that presumably served as an additional guide to him throughout the process of translating the play from Polish into English.

Walker's second objection to Early's and Pooley's argumentation brings forward an issue that has been deliberately silenced so far in our discussion on the study of the play's literary level, namely the question of intentionality and consciousness of one's acts. "How many of us ... respond with conscious delight to everything we read [and] how often we can really bring to the conscious level the reasons for the emotional impact which some literature has on us?", Walker rightfully wonders (1156). "As a teacher," he admits, "I have ... read, studied, and left novels, plays, poems, and stories with nothing to say about them. I was neither enthralled nor appalled" (1157).

As far as Stanislavsky's actors are concerned, this is the first time he asks his pupils to perform an action that the receptors of a literary work would not necessarily perform if they were not driven or requested to do so. Acquiring, however, an overall emotional and intellectual appreciation of the play's and the playwright's uniqueness, to be able to *say something about them*, is something that for Stanislavsky cannot be left to chance. The actors' pause is a deliberately employed device that will assist them in fine-tuning their

receptiveness in order to be able to add this particular layer of understanding to every play and every playwright they come across. Seen from a translational perspective, on the other hand, the notion of literary appreciation appears to be a rather unexplored area. Although one cannot but wonder whether Clark would intentionally suspend his creative process in order to review and complement the stylistic or linguistic qualities of the creation with an emotional appreciation of the text's effect, there is no evidence to suggest otherwise. As far as question of the consciousness of what exactly it was that made him laugh while reading the play is concerned, this will be answered in the chapter to follow where we will explore in more detail the period of emotional experience.

The last external level Stanislavsky discusses is the aesthetic one, i.e. "how the material in the scripts connects with the other arts (visual, musical)" of the upcoming performance (Benedetti, *Stanislavski: An Introduction* 45). At this stage the work of Stanislavsky's actors is divided into two parts. On the one hand they are requested to explore the last external aspect of the play, that is the information provided by the playwright with regard to the setting, the costumes, the lighting, the characters' postures and manners, and finally the music and sounds of the play. On the other hand, Stanislavsky permits his actors for first time to leave aside the physical text and its creator and to turn their attention to the metaphorical one, i.e. the performance, and the contribution of their co-creators to its construction. There are three main reasons why he wants his pupils to be closely observing this discourse of metamorphosis from page to stage reality. The first one is that this way they will acquire an appreciation of the technical and creative challenges their co-workers face and therefore a better overall understanding of the construction of the spectacle. The second one is that through the exchange of ideas between the director, the designers and the technicians, the actors will learn more about the differences between the spatiotemporal conditions that will be used in the performance and those historically

preceding or following them. The last and perhaps most important reason is that the decisions taken for all these different aspects of the play's performance by the production team will determine the parameters within which they are to imagine their characters operate in the upcoming stage of the creation of inner circumstances.

At first glance, neither point that Stanislavsky's actors are requested to view the performance's resources from appears to be unknown to the translators of dramatic texts. According to Patrice Pavis, the translation of the playwright's work has to go through three distinct and successive phases of concretization before being received by the target audience. These phases are the "textual", which involves what was described earlier as the *macrotextual translation* of the source text, the "dramaturgical", which deals with the "transfer of stage directions, whether by way of linguistic translation or by representing them through the *mise en scène*'s extralinguistic elements" and finally the "stage concretization", which concerns the "onstage testing of the text" (*Theatre at the Crossroads* 139-141). Discussing in particular the latter phase of concretization Pavis argues that

"... the translation [that is] already inserted in a concrete *mise en scène* is linked to the theatrical situation of enunciation by way of an entire deictic system. Once it is ... linked, the dramatic text can relieve itself of terms which are comprehensible only in the context of its [original] enunciation. This is accomplished by considerable use of deictics – personal pronouns or omissions – or by relocating descriptions of people and things in the stage directions and then patiently waiting for the *mise en scène* to take them up. The translation that is intended for the stage makes this economy even clearer, by trimming the source text even more. One might, for example, translate 'I want you to put the hat on the table' by 'Put it there' accompanied by a look or a gesture, thus reducing the sentence to its deictic elements" (ibid. 144).

Observing Pavis's description of the text's progression from its source to its target environment, one could argue that drama translators come in contact with the aesthetic level of the text using the same two perspectives Stanislavsky suggests his actors ought to: on the one hand the perspective of the playwright, i.e. the aesthetic level's textual

aspect, which is revealed during the stage of *dramaturgical concretization*, and on the other the director's and production teams' perspective, i.e. the aesthetic level's performance aspect, which is revealed during the stage of *stage concretization*. There are, however, two problematic points with such a suggestion that need to be noticed at this point.

The first one is that the process Pavis describes concerns the route the translated text yet not necessarily the translator follows. In other words, although the text eventually reaches the reality of the stage, translators, unlike Stanislavsky's actors, are not necessarily present when this happens. Keeping in mind the case discussed earlier of translators being commissioned to produce only a literal translation of the playwright's text which they then hand over to a playwright or to the performance's director for finalising, one would have to admit that Sirkku Aaltonen is absolutely right in arguing that there are two categories of translators, namely "those whose only connection with the stage is the translation work" and those "who work within the theatre" ("Translating" Plays 92). Considering this distinction, one could accordingly argue that despite appearances not all translators share the same contact with Stanislavsky's aesthetic plane: for those not present at the play's rehearsals, the sole source of information about the setting, the costumes or the music and sounds of the performance is the descriptions provided by the playwright in the text and in the stage directions. It is only the translators who will attend the rehearsals that will have the opportunity to add to the playwright's conception of these features the director's and the production team's interpretation of them.

The second problem concerns the use of the deictic property of dramatic language in the translation of drama. According to Susan Bassnett-McGuire, by determining "the interaction between the characters on stage", deictic units "also determine characterisation and ultimately feed into the other codes of performance" ("Ways Through the Labyrinth" 98). By enquiring into the way these units operate in the source language

text, translators are able to identify what their presence in or absence from the target language text is likely to signify and how it may consequently influence the dynamics of the scene. Keir Elam brings forward a similar suggestion in his work arguing that deixis establishes an inextricable link between the textual and the theatrical situation not only due to the “orientation of the [deictic] utterance[s] towards [their] context” (139) but also through the “potential gesturality” (ibid. 142) that is inherent in deictic references such as “personal or possessive pronouns (‘I’, ‘you’, ‘he’, ‘mine’, ‘yours’, ‘his’, etc.) or adjectives (‘my’, ‘your’, ‘his’), or demonstrative pronouns and adjectives (‘this’, ‘that’) or adverbs (‘here’, ‘now’)” (ibid, 140). A controversy regarding Polonius’ famous line in Act II sc. ii in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* may serve as an example of how *orientation* and *gesturality* constitute a sensitive yet powerful structural part of deictic language. In Elam’s work *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, Polonius is quoted saying to Claudius “Take this from *these*, if this be otherwise” (142). In Oxford World’s Classics’ edition of the Bard’s play, on the other hand, Polonius line reads “Take this from *this*, if this be otherwise” (211).¹¹³ There are two observations to be made about the particular line. The first one is that, as the editor of the Oxford edition, G. R. Hibbard, rightfully points out, Shakespeare’s line will be “unintelligible” to the text’s recipient if it is not accompanied by the explanation that “the first *this* means ‘my head’, the second ‘my shoulders’ and the third ‘my version of what has happened’” (211). Although Pavis is right in arguing that deixis can be employed as a device for reducing a line’s length, a deictic utterance’s bond with its context is so strong that if it stays unknotted, any such condensation might fail to attain the desired outcome of textual economy, leading instead to incomprehensibility.

The second observation is that Polonius’s line calls unavoidably for a particular gesture that will clarify the utterance’s referential context, for as Émile Benveniste points

¹¹³ The emphasis added in both versions of the line is mine.

out, demonstrative utterances are identifiable with “the object designated by simultaneous ostension in the present situation of discourse” (qtd. in Elam 87). At this point Elam makes an extremely interesting comment arguing that in Polonius’s case “the accompanying gestures ... are inscribed in the language itself, rendering quite redundant the stage directions added by ... modern editors [i.e.] (‘he points to his head and shoulders’)” (ibid. 142). Hibbard, on the other hand, who does mention in his edition of Shakespeare’s play that the character says the line “touching his head and his shoulder”, maintains that the first time the particular stage directions were included in the text was not in modern times but rather in “Pope’s second edition of 1728” and that “up to that date there had, presumably, been a stage tradition for such a gesture” (211). Granted that without some sort of explanation it would be impossible to understand what Polonius is referring to, one can only assume that Elam dismisses the particular stage directions on the premise that they can be adapted to each performance’s *mise en scène*. Depending on production Polonius could point to any object that could enjoy the symbolic value of life or power and whose loss or deprivation would consequently mean its owner’s ruination. Such an object could be, for example, a medal on his chest, if Polonius were to be portrayed as a general. In other words, regardless of how attached deixis may be to the original context it is also unavoidably production dependent, since every staging of the play cannot but constitute a new context. Considering, however, that the change from *this* to *these* may be perceived to indicate that the actor playing Polonius needs to point at, touch or show one thing in the first version of the line and two in the second, one could argue that a variety of possible gestures, such as the one involving a medal, will not be available to the director who will be using Elam’s version of the text. It seems, therefore, that every choice of deictic reference shifts both the referential context of the utterance as well as any *gesturality* inherent in it, exerting pressure on the director to adapt the scene’s staging accordingly. It is at this point

that the distinction described earlier between the two categories of translators leads to a problem.

In the above citation Pavis appears to be presenting two different cases. On the one hand he seems to be promoting the use of deictics once the dramatic text has been scenically defined within a certain *mise en scène*, while on the other he seems to suggest that the translator may proceed to use deictic references already during the stage of *dramaturgical concretization*, i.e. even prior to the concretization of the *mise en scène*, which will eventually *take them up*. Granted that both cases hold true, this would mean that both translators who are attending the rehearsals (Ta) and translators who are not (Tna) could make use of the “deictic articulation of language in the drama” without affecting in a different way the play’s staging (Elam 139). By examining the example Pavis brings forward, however, it will become evident that this is not the case when it comes to substituting references to the performance’s resources with deictic ones. The speaking character’s utterance the French scholar uses consists of two parts:

I want you to

put the hat on the table

Setting aside the first part and the reasons that might have led to its elimination from the proposed translation,¹¹⁴ one could arguably recognise within the second part four types of information the playwright provides the text’s recipient with about the scene’s

¹¹⁴ The most plausible explanation for this reduction is that Pavis considers the first fragment to be a directive speech act that is semantically inherent in the second part of the utterance. What needs to be noticed, however, is that not all speech acts allow such a merging to take place. Were the first part of the original line to have been, for example, a commissive speech act instead, i.e. were one to substitute *want* with *promise*, it would not have been possible to have it eliminated from the translation. Considering this, one could argue that for his purposes Pavis needed to have rewritten the utterance ‘I want you to put the hat on the table’ as ‘I want you to put it there’ in order to illustrate how the original text’s references to the objects could have been substituted with deictic references.

setting and stage directions:

- Quantity: there are at least two objects to be used.
- Quality: two of the objects to be definitely used are a *hat* and a *table*.
- Relation: the first of the two objects to be definitely used is to be placed *on* the second one.
- Means to achieve the relation between the objects: the first of the two objects to be definitely used is to be *put* on the second one.

This information is available to both the Ta and the Tna through the reading of the ST. Granted, however, that both Ta and Tna choose to translate the line as it stands in the original, only the former will confirm whether or not the staging of the particular scene will take place in accordance with the original formulation. A director may choose, for example, any or all of the following: to use more objects, of a different quality, standing to a different relation to each other, which is to be achieved by a different means. In other words, the line ‘*Put the hat on the table*’ could come to read instead ‘*Throw the coat and shoes behind the couch*’. Although such a rendering does not appear to deviate semantically or functionally from the original formulation, it is arguably clear that a translator could not decide on such an elaborated version of the line without having first secured the director’s and the set and costume designers’ consensus.

The same, however, appears to hold also for Pavis’s proposed *economical* solution. Analysing his suggested translation of the original line by ‘*Put it there*’, one could argue that the translator maintains the quantity of two in terms of the objects to be used as well as the means of achieving the relation between them. At the same time by not specifying the objects’ quality or the relation they stand to each other, he or she definitely grants greater

freedom to the director to choose what suits best the needs of the performance. The use of the distal deictic *there*, however, denotes that the second object is located away from the speaker. Considering how this proxemic feature specifies, contrary to the original formulation, the position of the characters and of the objects at the particular moment, one could argue that even in this case the translator cannot avoid framing, even if only in part, the scene's staging according to his or her own understanding. It seems therefore that since deictic language proposes, if not to say determines, to a lesser or greater extent, a play's staging, it is only if it is used by the translator after the play's *mise en scène* has been concretised that it will not encroach on the director and the production team's work.

Stanislavsky too was a fervent supporter of the notion of collective effort in the theatre. His advice to a "famous artist [who] mailed [him] a sketch of [his] make-up, together with categorical and strict remarks about how [he] was to put [his] make-up on" (An Argument, 178), was not to never again attempt to promote his own aesthetic but rather not to do it until he has first worked together with the director and the actors.

"Come to us and work with us along with the directors of plays, with actors as they analyse plays, and come to know the life it enfolds. Help us in our joint creation, and when you ... come to an understanding of the possibilities inherent in the available material -acting and stage- then you can go to your own studio and give scope to your own inspiration. Then what you create will not be alien to us, for we shall have made common cause in our struggles and sufferings. But until such time ... you will be a stranger in our midst, an unwanted member of our family, a transient roomer in our home" (ibid. 181).

Considering Stanislavsky's evident determination to ostracise from his theatre those not willing to comply with his demand for collectiveness, one could suggest that he would have probably reacted in a similar way even if the artist in question were to simply have sent his work without providing any instruction on how it was to be used. Translators, however, cannot postpone their creation until the director and the actors have analysed the

playwright's work as they carry the responsibility of providing them with it in the first place. It seems therefore that in order to use the text's deictic units in a Stanislavskian manner, translators will need to be prepared to produce two separate texts: one for the director and the performance team and another one by them, aiming in the first case at providing those responsible for the construction of the spectacle with an as-intact-as-possible depiction of all the play's resources the way they are to be found in the playwright's creation, and in the second case at revisiting the text in order to adjust it to the director's and the production team's decisions; something akin to the *co-operative translation strategy* that Bassnett-McGuire brought forward in her work ("Ways Through the Labyrinth" 91). Such a recursive updating process could ensure not only that translators would work together with the production team, as is Stanislavsky's wish, but also that they would experience the play's transformation from page to stage in a manner similar to theirs.

What seems to be the true problem with deixis, however, is that it concentrates the translators' attention only on the way the visual image of the play's objects and the auditory image of its sounds relates to the kinesthetic or motor image of the dramatic characters' or actors' bodies and the auditory image of their voices. According to Stanislavsky's reasoning, however, the actors need to study the text's aesthetic level independently of anything else, particularly their own presence on stage. In order for translators to explore the aesthetic level of the playwright's work in accordance with Stanislavsky's guidelines, they would also need to exclude the actors' and the characters' movement and speech from interfering with the perception of the play's imagery.

Offering a summary of our findings so far, one could argue that, with minor exceptions, emphasis Stanislavsky wants his actors to place on setting apart and studying each of the text's constituting elements in isolation and on supplementing their work with extra-textual material is shared also by drama translators. Additionally, both Stanislavsky's

actors and drama translators share a keen interest in decoding the motives and constraints that lie hidden behind the dramatic characters' actions and utterances, in bridging the gap between the play's and their own reality, and in evaluating the playwright's work. And as it will be seen in chapter to follow, these common points of interest will be supplemented by their common desire to come emotionally closer to the dramatic characters.

Chapter IV

The Art of Experiencing As Emotional Identification:

The Period of Emotional Experience

IV.1. Creating Inner Circumstances and Appraising the Facts

After having methodically dissected the life in the fictional world and studied in detail its external elements, actors proceed to approach the play no longer “by intellectual analysis or other conscious means of knowledge, but through [their] own sensations, [their] own real emotions, [their] personal life experience” (Stanislavski, *Creating a Role* 25). According to Stanislavsky, the transition from intellectual to emotional perception is to be achieved in three phases. The first phase, which he refers to as “putting life into the external circumstances” (ibid. 18), is one of *passive imagination*: the actors try to visualise themselves in the play’s fictional world yet not as the characters they have been assigned to by the director but as observers, as “the audience of [their] own dreams” (ibid. 20).¹¹⁵ Existing amid the play’s circumstances is to be achieved by the performers’ “inner eye” and “inner ear”, which enables them to “see all sorts of visual images, living creatures, human faces, their features, landscapes, the material world of objects [and] hear all sorts of melodies, voices, intonations, and so forth” (ibid. 20).¹¹⁶ In order for the inner vision and

¹¹⁵ The way Stanislavsky approached this particular stage during the last period of his work is indicative of the differences between the method of Affective Cognition, which Hapgood translates as “analysis of feelings” (Stanislavski, *Creating a Role* 8), and that of Active Analysis, also known as the Method of Physical Actions. During his early work on Griboyedov’s play *Woe from Wit*, Stanislavsky “creates Famusov’s [the protagonist] house and its many rooms in his imagination, visualizing himself sitting in his study, sleeping in his bed, ascending the staircases” (Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 155). In his work *Stanislavski in Rehearsal*, Vasili Toporkov, on the other hand, describes how Stanislavsky asks the cast of his final project Molière’s *Tartuffe* to turn the “two floors of the dressing room area” into the “two storey’s of Orgon’s house” (119). As Toporkov narrates, “the actors were asked to get to know the layout of the house and allocate the rooms among the family We had to decide where the dining room, the bedrooms, the servant’s quarters were We were asked to defend our own interests vigorously, with no compromise. However, all of our quarrels had to be conducted in accordance with the existing family relationships” (ibid. 119).

¹¹⁶ The significance Stanislavsky places on sight and hearing as opposed to smell, taste, and touch, whose role he considers “useful and even sometimes important” in the theatre yet “merely auxiliary” in terms of “influencing [the actor’s] emotion memory” (*An Actor Prepares* 170), seems to have stemmed directly from Ribot’s assertion that the impressions of “sight and hearing are those most easily revived” (159). According to the French psychologist, the “revivability of tastes appears [to be] especially connected with that of ordinary food, and with the state of alimentary canal (hunger)” (147) whereas the revival of odours, although “far superior as a means of information” (159), remains isolated to particular cases, such as the smell of “pinks, musk, violets, heliotrope, carbolic acid, the smell of the country, of grass etc.” (145). It should also be noted that contrary to Stanislavsky’s dismissal of the aforementioned senses as tools that can be used to arouse emotional memories, the American version of the System promoted exercises that

inner hearing not to create mere cold impressions of the things passively observed but to produce stimuli that will have an effective impact on the actors, Stanislavsky argued that the actors' imagination needs to be reinforced not only by their sensation memory, which is "based on experiences connected with [one's] five senses", but also by their emotional memory, which "can bring back feelings [one has] already experienced" (*An Actor Prepares* 168).¹¹⁷

During the second phase of the play's emotional perception, entitled by Stanislavsky "creating inner circumstances" (*Creating a Role* 25), the re-evocation of experiences of a sensuous and emotive nature assumes a more central role. The actor, still not as the dramatic persona he or she is asked to portray but as him- or herself, ceases to be an onlooker and attempts using his or her *active imagination* to come into contact with the objects and the characters of the play's fictional world. Although the interaction with the inanimate objects is carried out primarily through physical actions performed in the actors' mind, such as opening a door or moving a couch, Stanislavsky argues that approaching the play's animate objects should not be limited to sensing their "physical nearness" but extended to penetrating and "feel[ing] [their] soul" (ibid. 25).¹¹⁸

The third and final phase, which in Stanislavsky's terminology reads "appraising the facts" (ibid, 34), follows as the continuation of the former two. Building on the spiritual and emotional contact they have established with the dramatic personae and the sensory

relied precisely on them, such as "washing the hands with soap and water", "putting on make-up" and "tasting a lemon", in order to help the actor recapture "the stimuli ... involved in such ordinary tasks" (Strasberg, *Strasberg at the Actors Studio* 99).

¹¹⁷ In his work, Ribot distinguishes between three different types of impressions: those "of direct and easy revivability (visual, auditory, tactile-motor, with some reservations for the last named)", those of "indirect and comparatively easy revivability [namely] pleasures and pains, emotions" and finally "those of difficult revivability, either direct or indirect [such as] tastes, odours, and internal sensations" (157). By referring to *sensation* and *emotional memories* Stanislavsky arguably joins together Ribot's first and third group to a single category and reserves the psychologist's second group for a second one.

¹¹⁸ Stanislavsky's seemingly obscure concept of understanding the soul of a character could perhaps be best explained by virtue of an example from real life: just as one can see, hear, smell or even touch the person sitting next to on the bus, one could similarly try sensing whether the particular person is sad, worried or happy.

perception of their world, the actors of the *theatre of experiencing* are asked to return to their initial analysis of the facts of the play in order to assess afresh the link between the play's external and internal circumstances.

For Stanislavsky the stage of the creation of inner circumstances constitutes the centrepiece of the actors' period of study and serves as a means to shift of the actors' attitude "from the theatrical to the human" (ibid. 19). There are three distinct features that constitute the mainstay of this transition. The first one is the actors' transference from their actual to the dramatic work's fictional reality with the help of their "artistic imagination", as Stanislavsky chooses to call it (ibid. 19). The second factor is that the link between these two realities is to be established primarily by the use of the actors' visual and auditory imagery, whose powers Stanislavsky appears to value more than those of olfactory or gustatory imagery. The third one is the distinction Stanislavsky makes between the notions of *passive* and *active imagination*, in other words between the states of mere observation and physical engagement. Setting aside for the moment the latter factor, one could argue that the former two may arguably be recognised to play a part in the creative process of translators as well.

With respect to the first parameter Steeve Gooch, for example, argues that "with a play, [translators] are drawn in behind the dialogue to the imagined world of the characters' lives" (14). Jakob J. Kenda's method of "switching off" (160), an isolation technique which we shall explore in more detail at a later stage, attests arguably to the fact that it is not unlikely for translators to prepare their departure from their own reality in order to make absolutely sure that they will be able to observe unobstructed "the world through [the characters'] eyes", as John Clifford argues that drama translators ought to be able to do (265). The same conclusion about the translators' transcendence from their own to the dramatic characters' world could arguably be also drawn by observing their reaction at the opposite

end of the translation process. Karin von Schwede-Schreiner, for example, recounts that after having finished her translation of Jorge Amado's work *Tocaia Grande* she felt "deeply sad" about having to bid farewell to the play's characters. "I had lived so closely with them," narrates the German translator, "I had become so fond of them that I felt I had to say farewell to dear friends knowing that I would not see them again for long, long time" (qtd. in Kohlmayer, "Die Implizite Theorie" 337).¹¹⁹ Had von Schwede-Schreiner not entered and lived in the characters' fictional world, she probably would not have described her separation from her imaginary friends in such a lively manner.

Indications that translators, similarly to Stanislavsky's actors, not only acknowledge the importance of using one's inner ear but also use this particular device in order to make contact with the play's characters can also be recognised in an extremely rich variety of accounts. Maryse Pelletier, for example, argues that "the translator must hear the characters" (31) whereas Noel Clark discussing the importance of the translator's fluency in the language of the ST, wonders, "failing that, as he sits in his study, reading the original text, how can he hope to hear the characters speak" (24-25). In a rather similar manner Joseph Farrel maintains that "the translator must have as fine an ear as a piano tuner" (52) and Anthony Vivis quotes Elias Canetti in saying that each character has his or her own "acoustic mask" and that "unless a translation can recreate such acoustic masks, the language is likely to remain at worst cardboard, at best wooden" (40). Although if taken separately Farrel and Canetti's observations may be interpreted to be referring respectively to issues of the text's speakability or receptability and the detection of the speech patterns that characterise each dramatic character, one cannot fail to notice that if considered jointly they also hint at the notion of the translator needing to let the characters themselves speak

¹¹⁹ The translator's complete account reads in the original German: "Ich habe in diesem Buch gelebt, mit den Personen gelebt. Als ich fertig war, war ich tieftraurig. ... Ich habe mit diesen Personen so intensive Umgang gehabt, sie waren mir so ans Herz gewachsen, daß ich das Gefühl hatte, ich muß mich von lieben Freunden verabschieden und weiß, daß ich sie lange, lange nicht wiedersehen werde"

while he or she carefully listens. Such a suggestion would probably resonate with John Clifford who argues that when translating he tries to hear “what they [the characters] say [and] write it down” (265). It is arguably in the same spirit that Nicholas de Lange narrates that when he was translating the lines of the “female narrator [who is set to be] living in Jerusalem in the 1950s and speaking Hebrew in her real life” in Amos Oz’s work *My Michael*, he tried to approach the character herself and imagine “what sort of words does she use, does she say wireless or radio, does she say frock or dress” (17). De Lange’s attempt to isolate in his mind’s ear the words of the particular character could be argued to be the reason why Gregory Rabassa maintains that the translator “must have an all-hearing and receptive ear through which he has stored up a great treasure of expression, words, and turns of phrase” (35), an opinion shared also by Curt Meyer-Clason who in a identical manner argues that “the translator must have saved in his ear” a wide range of lexical and vocal characteristics, from the way “an unskilled worker ... a college professor [or] an anti-nuclear activist” speaks to “the tone of voice of the toilet lady in the parliament” (qtd. in Kohlmayer, *Oscar Wilde in Deutschland* 88).¹²⁰

The juxtaposition of the text’s inner with its outer sound appears also to be a common concern among translators. Jukka Mannerkorpi, for example, argues that when translating “the novels of Marguerite Duras or Claude Simon [she could] hear their language in [her] head [and then] read passages aloud to make sure the two versions [sounded] the same” (40). It is in a similar manner that Robert W. Corrigan suggests to translators “to hear the actor speaking in [their] mind’s ear” (101) and that George Wellwarth argues that “it is absolutely imperative when translating a play to translate it aloud [and that] having done that, [the translator] should [also] read his translation aloud to

¹²⁰ Meyer-Clason’s complete account reads in the original German: “Der Übersetzer muß also im Ohr gespeichert haben, wie ein Spezialarbeiter, ein Hilfsarbeiter, ein Handwerker spricht, ein Bürger der Vorkriegs- und Nachkriegszeit, ein Beamter ... wie ein Hochschullehrer, ein Schulmann, ein Griechenschwärmer oder ein Atomkraftgegner redet. Er muß die Suada der Medienarbeiter kennen ... Er muß aber auch den Tonfall der Toilettenfrau in der Residenzstuben kennen”.

someone totally unacquainted with the play, preferably an actor” (141). In an attempt to secure that he would be able to “marry” the performers’ “particular voice to the voice of the text”, Neil Bartlett chose to have “a tape recorder on [his] desk with some of the voices of the actors” when working on the translation of Jean Genet’s play *Splendid* (71). Having not opted for such technologically advanced solution as Bartlett, Carole Anne-Upton’s was forced to redraft “in and after each rehearsal” portions of her translation of Maeterlinck’s play *The Blind*, as although she “had been hearing the text in [her] English accent” when working on it alone, she also had to find a way “to accommodate the rhythm and speech patterns of [the] Northern Irish actors” who were going to perform it (45).

According to Jänis, however, the translators who participated in her survey and “underlined the importance of hearing the dialogue [were] fewer than those who spoke about seeing the scenes” (350). According to the scholar, the latter group of drama translators argued that when working on a text instead of hearing the dialogue, “they see the scenes containing the dialogue they translate in their minds, they stage the play and they act all the roles” (ibid. 350). Remarkably, it is in an identical way that Otrun Zuber also maintains that “in the process of translating a play, it is necessary for [the translator] to mentally direct, act and see the play at the same time” (93). Armin Paul Frank (251) and Rainer Kohlmayer (*Oscar Wilde in Deutschland* 75-88) refer synoptically to the particular mental stage as “Kopftheater”, i.e. ‘mind theatre’, whereas Helmut Scheffel opts for terming it “Film im Kopf”, in other words ‘mind movie’ (qtd. in Kohlmayer, “Die Implizite Theorie” 335). Although the translators’ description of this *mind movie* or *mind theatre* indicates a multifarious experience, one can easily recognise visualisation as one of its constituting elements.¹²¹ It is despite or rather in addition to his previously described

¹²¹ According to Rainer Kohlmayer, “nearly all of the translators” who participated in the series *Die Kunst des Übersetzens* [The Art of Translation] transmitted by the German equivalent of BBC radio, Deutschlandfunk, in 1996, “mentioned more or less clearly that they have had a holistic image of the speaking characters” when translating for the stage (“Die Implizite Theorie” 333).

auditory approach to the text that Bartlett appears to have also gone through such an enriched visualisation process when translating Racine's play *Berenice*.¹²² In trying to explain to David Johnston why he chose to have Antiochus and Berenice saying *goodbye* instead of *alas* in the final lines of the play, the acclaimed translator argues that "it's all to do with [their] breath" (69). "It's hard to put it into words," Bartlett concludes, "but you have to imagine how the actors would say the words" (ibid. 69). Clark, on the other hand, who maintains that aside from enabling translators to hear the characters speak, fluency in the source language will also help them to "see them move", is arguably referring to a purely visual experience when arguing that in the case of his work on Joost van den Vondel's *Lucifer* there was nothing in the way the play was finally staged that "resembled at all the images [he] had in [his] mind while translating the text" (31).

Despite their similarities, however, the way Stanislavsky's actors and translators come into contact with the imaginary world of the play appear to differ in several ways. One of the differences that are to be found among them concerns the parameter left out of our discussion so far, i.e. the actors' switch from a passive to an active approach to the play's fictional world. Despite the previous accounts suggesting that entering the characters' world constitutes part of the translators' creative process, there is arguably no indication that those translating for the stage are also likely to go so far as to imagine themselves actually walking through the corridors or examining the furniture of Hamlet's castle, playing with Laura Wingfield's collection of glass animals, or taking a seat opposite Blanche DuBois as she travels from Laurel, Mississippi to New Orleans in order to talk to her or to try to sense her thoughts before she boards the titular streetcar. Although admittedly one cannot but speculate about the depth or nature of each translator's contact

¹²² Bartlett's description of both a visual and an auditory imagery experience can be argued to be the reason that led Jānis to suggest in her article that "it would be arbitrary to divide ... translators into 'seers' and 'hearers', since references to both seeing and hearing can be detected in [their accounts]" (350). Stanislavsky, on the other hand, shows no reluctance to divide actors into those "of things seen" and those "of things heard" and to consider himself as belonging to the first type (*Creating a Role* 20).

with the fictional world's objects and characters, the differences concerning the other two parameters will demonstrate that there is good reason to suspect that the particular hands-on type of contact Stanislavsky envisions that his actors will be able to establish with the play's animate and inanimate objects, lies probably outside the translators' conventional process of approaching a play.

Starting off with the way translators described in their accounts their transcendence into the play's fictional world, one could suggest that their experiences differ on two points from what Stanislavsky describes in his account. The first one concerns a divergence in the process's instigation. Gooch's claim that translators are *drawn* into the play's world may arguably be perceived to indicate that whether or not translators will find themselves transferred into the source text's fictional reality is more a matter of the text's attractive influence than it is of their own conscious decision. Kenda's suggested *switching off* technique, which could be considered as a possible exception due to its active and conscious premises, does not seem to strongly oppose such a claim, as its main objective appears to be the creation of a condition favourable to the reception of the text's stimuli that aims at isolating the translators from their environment rather than leading them forward towards the text itself. Despite the fact that Stanislavsky uses the passive-active antithesis in order to describe the different types of stance his actors ought to adopt when trying to imagine themselves in the characters' world, one needs to keep in mind that the entire process is initiated exclusively by the actors, in other words it is, in essence and throughout, a directly active undertaking.

That is not to say, of course, that translators do not actively seek to gain access to what is hidden inside the text. According to George Steiner's hermeneutic notion, after the stage of "initiative trust" comes that of the translator's "aggression", an active, "incursive and extractive ... manoeuvre of comprehension [that] is explicitly invasive and exhaustive"

(313-314). In a similar way Katharina Reiss is also promoting the need for a more active attitude on behalf of the translator in particular cases. Discussing Eugene Nida and George Mounin's understanding of the notion of "situational contexts" in translation, Reiss maintains in her work *Translation Criticism-The Potentials and Limitations: Categories and Criteria for Translation Quality Assessment* that in cases of "interjections, allusions [or] shortened colloquial expressions" employed by authors "in the volatile dialogues of plays or novels", translators are left "quite helpless unless they are able to imagine themselves 'in the situation' of the speakers" (68-69). It is only then, Reiss concludes, that translators can place themselves "in a position to find an optimal equivalent in the target language that will enable the reader of the translation to understand both the words and their context" (ibid. 69).

However, despite convincingly supporting the notion of translators being required to adopt a consciously active attitude towards the author's creation, neither Steiner's broader nor Reiss's more specific account appear to be completely aligned with the way Stanislavsky imagines his actors entering the characters' world. As far as Reiss's suggestion is concerned, there are two points that could arguably be recognised as problematic. The first one is that the example cases she brings forward appear to confirm rather than oppose the earlier suggestion that it is probably the text's peculiarity that pulls translators into the fictional reality rather than their own selection that leads them into it. The second point comes as an unavoidable extension of the first one: considering that by reversing Reiss's suggestion, one would be led to argue that when the characters' dialogue is more explicit or complete, translators are able to transmit to their work's recipients the words and context of the characters' situation without having to *imagine themselves in it*, it becomes clear that the scholar's approach is not entirely compatible with Stanislavsky's reasoning.

What makes Steiner's understanding of the translators' task appear to be problematic from a Stanislavskian perspective is not its set direction, which clearly mandates that it is the translators who have to move towards the text without waiting for it to call on them to do so. It is rather its suggested point of entrance, i.e. the place and time in the characters' life that it proposes translators should mentally transfer themselves to. This appears to be another point in which the way actors and translators experience their transference into the fictional reality differs. As this is inextricably linked to their differences on the level of the establishment of a connection between actual and fictional reality through the use of visual and auditory imagery, in other words the last parameter of Stanislavsky's proposed process, both sets of differences will be discussed here jointly.

Returning to Steiner's account and keeping in mind that, as was pointed out earlier, a playwright's creation usually presents its recipients with the fictional present of the dramatic situation, one could suggest that by following the scholar's proposal to invade the text, translators cannot but march themselves into the *hic et nunc* of the characters' lives. The translators' own accounts reveal a similar ambition, as what they appear to have in mind when referring to the object of their inner vision and inner hearing is also the play's events and their representation on the stage. This could arguably explain why there are so many references to the actors' delivery, to the text's acoustic presentation and to the audience's reception interwoven with the translators' remarks on using their inner ear to approach the play and why, when they describe what they see in their mind's eye, their viewpoint constantly switches from that of the actors, to that of the director, to that of the audience and back.

Stanislavsky's actors, however, are not concerned with the events of the play for they will live through them during the performance. Their aim at the particular stage of their creative process under discussion here is neither to imagine the characters in the

events described in the text nor to foresee their own portrayal of them but rather to reconstruct and explore in their imagination the setting prior to the play's events; they want to experience the life of the play's characters up until the moment the so-called *fourth wall* is lifted. This consequently means that the System's actors not only aim at entering the characters' world at an earlier point than the one Steiner suggests translators ought to be using but also that they use their visual and auditory imagery not as a battering ram that will pierce the hulls of the stage of the characters' life but rather as a pathway that will lead them to its coulisses. By transferring themselves into the dramatic characters' invisible past, Stanislavsky's actors aim at gathering the necessary sensory, emotional and intellectual momentum that will guide them through their scenically presented and therefore witnessed present and into their unknown future. In order to assist his actors in maintaining that momentum during the performance, Stanislavsky insisted on employing as many realistic effects as possible in the productions he was in charge of. As he pointed out,

“The usual impression is that a director uses all of his material means, such as the set, the lighting, sound effects and other accessories, for the primary purpose of impressing the public. On the contrary. We use such means more for their effect on the actors” (*An Actor Prepares* 183).

Although Stanislavsky's additions did not always find favour with the playwrights with whom he had the opportunity to collaborate, he knew that the *effect* he wanted to secure is of double importance to the actors: not only would it help them ferry across from the rehearsals to the performance their established contact with the play's imaginary reality, but it could also assist them in establishing that contact anew in case for whatever reason it got lost during the performance.¹²³ In explaining to his pupils how easily their attention

¹²³ The additional sound effects Stanislavsky wanted to insert at the end of Act I in *The Cherry Orchard*, such as the sound of “a shepherd [playing] on his pipe, the neighing of horses, the mooing of cows, the bleating of sheep and the lowing of the cattle” (qtd. in Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 26), led Chekhov, who

may dissipate in front of an audience, Stanislavsky cautioned them that “as soon as [their] border begins to waver, [they] must withdraw quickly to a smaller circle [of attention]” (ibid. 84). By using external realities of the stage, such as additional environmental noises, Stanislavsky aimed not only at enticing his actors into the world of the play but also at providing them with additional points that, if needed, could function as a safety net for their attention. His attempt to instil in his actors the need to plan ahead not only their advancement but also their retreat is evidently another clear sign of the consciousness he wanted them approaching the fictional world of a dramatic work with.

Although translators are also faced with the possibility of losing contact with the characters’ world, one rarely, if at all, comes across accounts describing their reactions to such an occurrence. John Rutherford’s experience described in the introductory chapter on drama translations is one of the few valuable exceptions. Setting aside the anecdotal nature of Rutherford’s account, there are three points in his narrative that are likely to strike not just any literary or, in our case, drama translator but also any Stanislavskian actor as particularly familiar. The first is the difficulty Rutherford experienced when trying to keep up with the demands of the fictional while at the same time fulfilling the obligations to the real. This is arguably the problem that Kenda’s proposed *switching off* method addresses and aims at dealing with as well as the reason Stanislavsky placed such great emphasis on relaxation and concentration exercises to be carried out not only before his actors commenced on their work but also after they had finished it. The second point is Rutherford’s contact with the author’s creation through auditory imagery, an experience

“loved sounds on the stage himself” (Stanislavski, *My Life in Art* 420) to remark during the play’s rehearsals, loudly enough for Stanislavsky to hear: “Listen, I shall write a new play which will open like this: ‘How wonderful, how quiet! Not a bird, a dog, a cuckoo, an owl, a nightingale, or clocks, or jingling bells, not even one cricket to be heard’” (qtd. in Benedetti, *Stanislavski: A Biography* 135). Stanislavsky, who acknowledges in his autobiography that the particular “stone was intended for [his] garden”, maintains that he “took all the bypaths [he] could think of” in order to “create a mood around [the actors], in the hope that it would grip them and call forth creative vision” (*My Life in Art* 420). According to his account, in the early days of the Moscow Art Theatre the actors’ “inner technique [and their] ability of reacting on another’s creative soul were very primitive” (ibid. 420).

that, as was already pointed out, many translators share and one of the mediums that Stanislavsky argued his actors ought to be using when approaching the characters' world. The third recognisable point is more or less the opposite of the second, in other words the unexpected silence of the voices. Again, neither translators nor actors are unfamiliar with this temporary failure of communication with the dramatic work of an author. Particularly as far as Stanislavsky is concerned, one should keep in mind that it was precisely the sudden disappearance of inspiration that motivated him to explore the possibility of coming up with a way to harness it.

In addition to these three points, however, there are two more that are of particular interest from a Stanislavskian perspective and of great importance to the present discussion about the way translators enter the fictional world of the dramatic characters. The first one is Rutherford's admitted ignorance of what exactly it was that suddenly prevented the characters' from speaking in his mind's ear but also, and more importantly perhaps, of what made them heard in the first place. Considering the latter part of his acknowledgement one could argue that it serves as a sign that it is not unlikely for translators to find themselves in the characters' world without knowing how exactly they managed to get there. This could also be thought as an additional indication that although translators undoubtedly experience transcendence into the fictional reality, they do not always initiate it.

As far as the former part of Rutherford's confession is concerned, it is closely related to the final interesting point of his narration, i.e. the luckily successful application of an *ad hoc* devised solution that helped him overcome both the initial slow flow as well as the subsequent *drying up* of the words. Therein lies arguably also the missing link between what happens when the translators and the dramatic characters part properly at the end of the translation task, as described earlier by Karin von Schwede-Schreiner, and what happens when the translators' contact with the fictional characters comes to an abrupt and

premature end before the translation task is concluded.

Granted that translators are aware of the fact that they are likely to be confronted with the loss of contact with the characters' world, Rutherford's case could lead one to suggest that they do not appear to be equally prepared to take proper precautionary measures either in order to prevent something like that from happening or, in case it does happen after all, to ensure that they will not find themselves completely locked out of the fictional world. To put it differently, contrary to Stanislavsky's actors, Rutherford did not have a *circle of attention* to fall back on once his *artistic imagination* began to fade. From a Stanislavskian perspective the two trips it took to restore his auditory imagery to working order, one across Western Europe and a smaller one across the house he lived in when the same problem arose again, cannot but be considered as impromptu remedies rather than reliable solutions. What would have happened had Rutherford not enjoyed the luxury of 'travelling'? What was he to do had either of his 'journeys' not functioned in the way it was believed it would?

What was arguably missing from Rutherford's interaction with Cervantes's creation was a sense of domination over it. The domination the Stanislavsky System promotes, however, has little in common with the violent depiction of "meaning brought home captive by the translator", as Steiner writes evoking Saint Jerome's "famous image" (314). Although Stanislavsky would have probably agreed with the sentiment of the translator carrying the responsibility to make the first step towards his or her subject, as he expects his actors to do, he would have arguably resented the aggressive overtones of Steiner and Saint Jerome's descriptions. As he points out in his work *An Actor Prepares*, "if a bird does not rise of its own accord you could never find it among all the leaves of the forest. You

have to coax it out, whistle to it, use various lures” (191).¹²⁴ Despite the fact that Stanislavsky uses the particular metaphor in order to describe the relation between the actors and their memory of emotions as they attempt to establish a kinship with the dramatic characters, a topic which will be discussed in detail in the following section, considering that the latter *active* part of the actors’ process at this stage is also based on their emotional perception of the fictional world, one could argue that the premises of his reasoning apply here as well: *hunters* should not abandon their position in the forest in the hope that the following day will bring them closer to their prey, nor should they try to force it out of its hiding by setting the entire forest on fire. On the contrary, they need to remain in the situation and try to attract their prey by outsmarting it. Stanislavsky admits himself that this is not an easy process. As he attempts to “coalesce with all the circumstances suggested by the playwright”, he becomes frustrated by his sense of self-awareness.

“Why fool myself? What I am feeling as I take this walk [in the house the characters reside in] is not the result of active imagination or a real sense of being in the situation. It is nothing more than self-deception. I am only forcing myself to have emotions, forcing myself to feel I am living something or other. Most actors make this mistake ... Nevertheless, in the course of my fruitless walk though [the] house there has been one instant when I really felt that I was there and believed in my own feelings. This was when I opened the door into the antechamber and pushed aside a large armchair; I really felt the physical effort entailed in that act That experience teaches me the exceptional importance of the part played by an object in helping me to get into the state if ‘I am’” (*Creating a Role* 26-27).

The physical action Stanislavsky performed in his mind was the *lure* necessary for his transference into the play’s fictional reality to be completed. Building on the established connection with the inanimate objects of the fictional world as he continues to execute similar imaginary physical actions, Stanislavsky finds himself gradually feeling confident

¹²⁴ According to Sharon Carnicke’s translation the corresponding passage reads: “If the bird will not fly to [the hunter] by herself, then nothing will bring her from the leafy thicket. There is nothing else to do but to entice the wildfowl out of the forest with the help of special whistles, called ‘lures’” (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 126).

enough to “push the test a step further [and] come into closer contact with animate objects”, first through sensing their physical presence and then through communicating directly with them (ibid. 27). Compared to Stanislavsky’s headlong rush forward, nevertheless, Rutherford’s reaction appears to equally retreat. Despite the fact that his improvised solutions enabled him to overcome the communication breakdown he experienced with the fictional characters, by seeking help outside the fictional world of *Don Quixote* in order to approach it anew, Rutherford seems to be stepping back to the stage of relaxation rather than forward to the clearly far more advanced one of employing *lures* to entice oneself into the play’s imaginary world.

Insofar as Rutherford’s experience can be considered to constitute a typical instance of a translator’s interaction with a playwright’s work, one could summarise the differences between the way translators and Stanislavsky’s actors proceed from their actual to a dramatic play’s fictional reality by saying that although both groups seem to have the same tools at their disposal and the same aim in mind to use them for, the former appears to do so in a more precarious manner. Regardless of whether it is the text that *draws* them or their spiritual buoyancy that leads them into the fictional world, translators find themselves living closely with the characters. The problem, however, is precisely that they do not always know what it was that helped them achieve that transcendence, how they managed to do it. The weaknesses of this unstable foundation become evident when the translators’ transcendence comes to a sudden halt and they are required to resume it. It follows that it becomes extremely difficult to expect those translators already walking such a tightrope to be able to go back to the beginning of the process that was just completed and execute it once more, as Stanislavsky argues that his actors ought to do during the stage of *appraising the facts*. For this last part of the actors’ period of study, which according to Stanislavsky involves their return to the level of facts in order to explore “what they

conceal ... from a fresh angle of vision” (ibid. 35), both the intellectual understanding and the sensory experiences of the play’s world and characters will need to be employed; one could suggest, therefore, that unless translators have managed to secure a very clear and authentic impression of the dramatic characters’ lives, they will not be able to perform in a Stanislavskian manner such a re-evaluation of the play’s events.

That is not to say, however, that the gap between Stanislavskian actors and drama translators on the levels of *putting life into external circumstances* and of *creating inner circumstances* cannot be bridged. Seen from Stanislavsky’s perspective, Jacob Kenda’s ability not only to *switch off* but also to sustain, as he argues, this state “for as long as necessary and even reawaken it after days or weeks if [he] feel[s] a certain problem needs more attention” (160), constitutes arguably one of the most promising starting points towards establishing a stable contact with the fictional reality and characters of a dramatic play. Once a communication channel has been opened and a continuous flow of interaction with the playwright’s creation has been achieved, translators could then set out to explore the fictional world in the manner Stanislavsky suggests his actors follow. It is this flow that could also enable them to come into emotional contact with the playwright’s characters.

IV.2. Emotional Experience

The methodology Stanislavsky proposes for the second and third periods of creating a role, in other words the periods of emotional experiencing and of physical embodiment, is modelled on the methodology suggested for the analysis of the play's given circumstances: the actors need to proceed from the external to the inner, from the objective to the subjective, from the physical to the psychological. Stanislavsky commences on the description of the process leading to the actor's emotional kinship with the character arguing that the "life on the stage, as well as off it, consists of an uninterrupted series of objectives" (*Creating a Role* 51) which can be distinguished in three types: the "external or physical", which are encountered, for example, when shaking one's hand in an everyday, mechanical way, the "inner or psychological", e.g. shaking one's hand with the purpose of expressing gratitude, respect or love, and finally the "rudimentary psychological", as in the case of shaking one's enemy's hand (Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares* 119).¹²⁵ Although, Stanislavsky continues, "the body lives its own habitual, motor existence and the soul lives its deeper psychological life", there is an indissoluble link to be found between them (*Creating a Role* 66). In other words "in every physical objective there is some psychology and vice versa" (Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares* 121).

To illustrate his understanding of how "a disembodied emotion is a non-existent one" (Ribot 95), Stanislavsky asks his pupils to think about a man returning from a long journey abroad who visits his friends at their house. In order to be able to truthfully reproduce on stage that particular event, the actor will need to identify both the physical objectives the character will have to attain such as, for example, to "enter the house, greet

¹²⁵ Although Hapgood is consistent in translating the Russian *zadacha* as *objective*, Carnicke argues that the particular term can also be translated both as *task* "demanded by the given circumstances of the play", which also the solution Benedetti opted for in his work, and as *problem*, e.g. an arithmetic problem (*Stanislavsky in Focus* 181).

people, orient himself”, as well as the psychological ones, such as to “exchange emotions, greetings, be interested in what he saw and heard about his dear friends” (Stanislavski, *Creating a Role* 61). This list of objectives or tasks, which Stanislavsky asserts would be “the same for anyone living in circumstances analogous to those in the play, just as it would be for any actor who is going through the experience of [the particular] role” (ibid. 61), forms what he calls, borrowing a term from music, “the score of the role” (ibid. 56). Yet, as it is precisely due to their typicality that these objectives “do not characterise the particular role in its own particular individuality”, it is necessary for the actor to identify also the inner tone of the role’s score, i.e. the character’s inner state while seeking to achieve these objectives (ibid. 63). “What would be changed in the score,” Stanislavsky asks putting himself in the position of the actor playing the particular character, “if I came home from abroad, as [the character] did, given the circumstances of his life, yet not in the state of a returning friend, but rather inflamed with an ardent love for [one of the characters residing at the particular house]?” (ibid. 65).

Although Stanislavsky finds it relatively easy to recall “the sense of serenity, rest, of arriving at one’s hearth” and to identify the actions accompanying it (ibid. 87), he admits to being rather powerless to “guess the feelings of another ... to get inside his skin” or even to answer the more generalised “what do men in love do when, after an absence of years, they are driving to see the lady of their dreams” (ibid., 87-88). It is only after also reformulating the second part of the question so as to involve himself, his own feelings and actions, by asking, in other words, “what would I do if I ... were riding in a cab ... going to see *her* ... my ideal she ... the kind of a she with whom one could at any moment fall in love again”, that Stanislavsky manages to “find in [him]self the familiarly aroused emotions ... of excitement and impatience of a man in love” (ibid. 88-89). By welding together his emotions for his ideal *she* to the physical and psychological aspect of coming back to one’s

own country after a prolonged absence, he can now play the same score in a different *key*. Having established that crucial inner, emotional connection with the character, Stanislavsky uses his previous work on the mental re-creation of the other characters, their house and living conditions etc. in order to “transplant her into the surroundings” of the play’s setting and the already familiar external and internal circumstances of the characters’ life in it (ibid, 88). “Now ... I can determine hour by hour ... I can provide meaning and justification for driving to [the characters’ house]” (ibid. 88-89), concludes Stanislavsky before addressing the difficulties of transferring the intellectual and emotional work of the actor to the physical reality of the rehearsal.

There are three challenging aspects about Stanislavsky’s advocated interchangeability of the character’s experiences and emotions with those of an actor. Discussing what he terms the “transcription problem”, in other words the “relation between the artwork and the artist’s experience” as suggested both by Tolstoy and Stanislavsky, scholar R. I. G. Hughes justifiably wonders: “How can the feelings felt by an actor be identified with those expressed by the character?” (39-41). Addressing himself both to the question concerning the extent of the actor’s emotional association with the dramatic character and also to what Hughes seems to leave unsaid, in other words whether such emotional substitution¹²⁶ can be achieved throughout the whole gamut of human emotions, Stanislavsky has his imaginary pupils protesting that an actor “cannot possibly contain all the feelings for all the roles in the world” (*An Actor Prepares* 177).¹²⁷ To answer both questions, Stanislavsky turns to his sources of inspiration.

¹²⁶ Although the term *substitution* is not to be found in Stanislavsky’s work, it is, nevertheless, how Robert Lewis chose to entitle the process of using one’s own experiences in order to understand the character’s emotional state and elicit in him-herself similar emotional responses (“Emotional Memory” 57).

¹²⁷ Echoing his teacher’s concerns, Richard Boleslavsky too has the character of The Creature asking the narrator: “Suppose I don’t find a similar feeling in my life’s experience, what then?” The narrator’s response is aligned with Stanislavsky’s teachings: “Impossible! If you are a sensitive and normal human being, all life is open and familiar to you. After all, poets and playwrights are human too. If they find experience in their lives to use, why shouldn’t you?” (38).

Referring to Tolstoy,¹²⁸ Stanislavsky argues, to his students' reassurance,¹²⁹ that although they "may not have in [their] nature either the villainy of one character or the nobility of another ... the seed of those qualities will be there because we have in us the elements of all human characteristics, good and bad" (ibid. 178).¹³⁰ Furthermore, recalling Pushkin's aphorism, he explains that verisimilitude refers "not to actual feelings themselves

¹²⁸ In an undated account Stanislavsky acknowledges Leo Tolstoy as the source of the argument about the universality of human emotions. Stanislavsky quotes the following passage from Tolstoy's *Resurrection*: "One of the most usual and widespread superstitions is that every person possesses only his own clear-cut qualities, that a man is good, evil, intelligent, stupid, energetic, apathetic etc. People are not like that ... Each man carries within him the germs of all human qualities" ("Types of Actors" 15)

¹²⁹ Stanislavsky's immediate response to the students' protest is rather disheartening. Before putting their minds at rest, he foreordains that "the roles for which [they] haven't the appropriate feelings are those [they] will never play well ... They will be excluded from [their] repertory" (*An Actor Prepares* 177). In his article "The Problem of Enactment", James M. Edie interpreted Stanislavsky's discouraging reaction as a counsel to "his students to avoid the roles for which they could find in their past the appropriate feelings" (309). Yet at another point Stanislavsky argues that the only roles an actor may choose not to play are "those that go against the grain with him by reason of his convictions or taste" ("Types of Actors" 17-18). As it is unclear whether Stanislavsky's caution to his students refers to the ideological, moral or aesthetic problems actors may face when asked to portray a particular character or to their inability to locate in them an experience similar to that of the character, I chose not to discuss Stanislavsky's exception.

¹³⁰ To his teacher's support, Richard Boleslavsky argues, using a rather exaggerated example, that "a good sensitive artist doesn't need any[thing] more than" the real-life experience of killing an annoying mosquito in order to "play Othello and Desdemona's final scene ... The rest is the work of magnification, imagination and belief" (39). Devine and Clark suggest an interesting bypath that could lead an actor to a more convenient starting point. "For most villains", they argue, "their state of perfection, of 'goodness', necessitates everyone else's wretchedness, so the villain must persuade the downfall of others in order to gain his/her own good. In *Much Ado*, for example, Don John informs us that he will have to resort to certain tactics to achieve his desire, tactics which will involve the destruction of Claudio and Hero. [Similarly] the stupid character may be trying to contribute to the solution of a problem, given his/her limited abilities. [Since] few people believe themselves stupid or villainous", Clark and Devine conclude, "from the point of view of the actor, every character is good" (17). It is in the exact same manner that Stanislavsky points out to his students that their "representation of [the part of a villain or a traitor] will never be convincing, neither will it produce a lasting impression on an audience, if [they] fail to discover for [themselves] where [their] villain has shown courage, or where – if only for one brief moment – he has been good ... if [they] fail to find one positive quality in him" (*Stanislavsky On the Art of the Stage* 185). Stanislavsky's line of thought can also be found in the accounts of several actors. This is how Sir Ben Kingsley, for example, talked in the TV show *Inside the Actors Studio* to interviewer James Lipton about his role of criminal Don Logan in the film *Sexy Beast*: "I can't see him as a villain cause I'm playing him and therefore I would short-circuit all his choices if I saw him as a villain and if presented him to you as a villain. So I see him as in a sense a man who is following a code of honor, who loves his tribe, who even more than that loves his position within that tribe and his position, as the greatest recruiting sergeant major of that tribe, is secure. It's not good playing villainy. I played Don as a wounded child ... the scream of the wounded child who says 'I love you. Why don't you love me?'" (Kingsley). In was in a similar manner that Jeremy Irons talked as guest in the same TV show about his experience working on the role of Humbert Humbert in Adrian Lyne's cinematic adaptation of Vladimir Nabokov's work *Lolita*: "I had all the people who worked with people who have been abused saying to me 'Why are you making this man a hero', well not a hero, but likeable and I said 'Well, he is the hero, he is the guy in the movie, you can't have the guy in a movie that you don't like'. 'And anyway', I said, 'you've got to like him to understand him, to understand the problem'. I mean, surely, that's something that drama can do, it can actually explain to us why people do things instead of just going 'They're evil, they're terrible people'. Just try and get in touch with that little bit in all of us that's evil and terrible" (Irons).

but to something very akin to them, to emotions reproduced indirectly, under the prompting of true inner feelings” (*An Actor Prepares* 51). The actor’s aim is not to achieve a literal, as something like that would be impossible, but “a felt identity” with the character (Hughes, “Tolstoy” 42).¹³¹ The arousal of “feelings ... that are *analogous* to those required for the part” (Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares* 177) and the actors’ belief both in them and in the actual and imaginary circumstances of the performance will be enough for them to be “carried off to another plane, to a life created by [their] imagination” (Stanislavski, “The Art of the Actor” 189) thus not only overcoming the spectacle’s artificiality but, more importantly, being led to “think, strive, feel and act in unison with [their] role” (Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares* 14).¹³²

Stanislavsky’s deep belief that “given the circumstances, the opinions [and] the social position of the character, [the actor] would be bound to act as [the character] did” (ibid. 305) leads unavoidably to a third problem, which could be seen as the Achilles’ heel of his reasoning: even by attaining such close proximity to the character’s emotions and achieving a firm belief in the given circumstances, it is doubtful whether the actor will be able to bring him- or herself to make the same “conditional judgements and conditional decisions” so as to act like the character (Hughes, “Tolstoy” 42). As Andreas Manolikakis, chairman of the Actors Studio MFA program at Pace University NY, points out, “were any given actress to be in Medea’s place, she might not have killed her children” (Παπαδόπουλος).¹³³ The answer to what may be thought of as a question of finding the suitable justification or motivation for the character’s utterances and actions comes not from Stanislavsky but from his real-life student Yevgeny Vakhtangov. Instead of

¹³¹ According to Stanislavsky, the actor of the *theatre of experiencing* does not aim at producing “an identical animated replica of the role as written by the author [but a] new living thing [that] has inherited the traits of both the actor who conceived it and gave it birth and the role that fecundated it” (“On Various Trends” 174).

¹³² The emphasis placed on the particular term is to be found in the original

¹³³ Manolikakis’s account reads in the original Greek: “Αν όμως μια ηθοποιός ήταν στη θέση της Μήδειας, μπορεί να μην σκότωνε τα παιδιά της”. The translation of the passage is mine.

anticipating, as Stanislavsky does, such justification to derive as a natural consequence from the actor's established empathy, or, as R. I. G. Hughes puts it, the "action [to] be guided by [the] recollected emotion" (42), Vakhtangov attempted to achieve the "complete fusion of the actor with his part" (Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares* 208) by placing the action, in a sense, prior to the process of emotional identification and then asking the actors to consciously use their imagination in order to relate their characters' motives to their own personality. In offering a comparative view of the two artists' points of departure, Lee Strasberg gives the following description:

"Stanislavski would say, 'Now, if you were Lady Macbeth, how would you do this? How would you behave?' ... On the other hand, Vakhtangov says, 'If you had to do such and such a thing, as Othello does, what would have to happen to you, what would motivate you to do that?'" ("Working with Live Material" 129).¹³⁴

By granting actors the freedom to appeal to imaginary conditions in order to establish the necessary link with the dramatic characters, Vakhtangov's formulation deals in a more effective way with the critics' objection that Stanislavsky's approach makes the characters' "reality descend to the level of the actor[s]" (ibid, 129) limiting thereby "the sphere of [their] creativeness to the extent of [their] own personal experience" (Stanislavski, "The Art of the Actor" 187). Stanislavsky was right in claiming that all artistic creations, such as the playwrights' characters, are shaped by the artists' "inner experience", in other words by their emotions and personal experiences, and yet they are not in any way constrained by it as it is the creators' "external experience", i.e. their imagination, that exalts them in numerous "shadings and combinations" (ibid. 188); but Vakhtangov's approach nevertheless offers a clearer view on how potential emotional or

¹³⁴ Looking at Stanislavsky's work one can easily identify the source Vakhtangov drew his inspiration from. As Stanislavsky points out to his pupils, "try to remember what you yourself were ever in a similar position and what you did. If you never were in one, create a situation in your imagination" (*An Actor Prepares* 305).

ethical gaps between the actors' and the dramatic characters' reality can be bridged.

In order for translators to apply Stanislavsky's dictum of the artist's emotional submission to the artwork they would need to live through the experiences contained in the SL creation by reviving them in themselves. According to both Tolstoy and Stanislavsky's reasoning this would be the only way for them to transmit and infect the receivers of their work with these experiences. Setting aside the formulation's prescriptivism, what such a challenging task does in other words mean is that translators would have to engage in a conscious emotional relationship with the ST using, unavoidably, their own emotions. Before proceeding to examine the feasibility and implications of applying such an approach to the particular case of translating dramatic texts, one has to ask: do the translators' emotions take part in the process of transferring texts from one language into another? According to Peter Bush, translators, already during the stage of reading, transcend into a state of mind that is not entirely controlled by their intellect. As he points out in his article "The Writer of Translations",

"translatory readings of literature provoke the otherness within the subject of the translator, work at a level not entirely under control of the rationalizing discourse of the mind, release ingredients from the subconscious magma of language and experience, shoot off in many directions, provoked by the necessity of the creation of new writing" (25).

Given that each translator has in him- or herself such an active volcano of words, impressions and emotions that can be set in motion by the mere reading of the ST, one could suggest that it might be possible to catch the eruption of its lava in the act. Seen from that perspective, empirical studies on translation may be considered as one of the sources one could draw on in order to identify what position the translators' emotions occupy in the process of translating texts. Despite the fact that there are scarcely any experiments conducted with literary texts, there is still valuable information that can be obtained from

the close observation and analysis of both professional and non-professional translators' behaviour and verbalisations during their work. Considering, however, the differences between translating a dramatic text and a "travel brochure", a "chewing gum advertisement" or the "editorial of the [Finnish newspaper] Helsingin Sanomat", for example, which were used in the experiment conducted by Tirkkonen-Condit and Laukkanen (47), it should be noted that any information acquired from the field of empirical studies on translation will need to be considered merely as an indication rather than as evidence of the way the translators' emotions might have an influence on their creative process.

There are two sets of empirical accounts that may be suggested to indicate that the translators' emotions participate in the process of transferring texts from one language into another. The first set is characterised by its references to the translators' intuition. As was already indicated by Bush's earlier description, there appears to be a visible and an invisible side to translating. Whereas some of the translators' thoughts and decisions are the result of conscious mental operations, others seem to be the outcome of rather subconscious mental processes. According to Vilen N. Komissarov this dual *modus operandi* is "necessitated ... by the very nature of human thinking" (349). As he points out in his article "Intuition in Translation", "all mental processes can either be based on analytical procedures or be the result of heuristic guesses, sudden insights, or intuitive conclusions which cut short the way to the final choice. The translator's mind is no exception" (ibid. 349). Attempting to strike a balance between these two aspects of translation, Hans Hönic argues that the process of transferring texts between languages can consequently be described as "an interplay between language reflex and methodical reflection" ("Übersetzen Zwischen Reflex Und Reflexion" 230) or "an interplay between cognition and intuition" ("Sagen, Was Man Nicht Weiß 153). Reflection, according to Hönic, "sets in

when [one's] reflex fails ('I don't know what this means') or when it clearly leads [one] into aporia ('No, this cannot be it')" ("Übersetzen Zwischen Reflex Und Reflexion" 230) whereas "intuition" is defined as "a kind of knowledge, which the translator is not aware of" (qtd, in Kußmaul, "Creativity in the Translation Process" 93). According to D. N. Perkins, this accumulated *knowledge* that the translator *is not aware of* serves a dual purpose. On the one hand, it acts "as judge, evaluating ideas and making sound choices among alternatives ready at hand" while on the other it serves as an "inventor, producing ideas by unexplainable mental leaps" (119). In a rather similar manner William Downes argues that intuition is to be understood as "a compulsive felt sense of the correctness of some view or a feeling of comprehending something which neither consciously involves reasoning nor is empirical in the normal way" (105). Despite the fact that the precise nature of intuition remains a matter of debate, according to Daniel Kahneman's most recent account there appears to be a "substantial agreement [among psychologists] on the characteristics that distinguish" intuition and reasoning (1451). Intuition is "fast, automatic, effortless, associative, and often emotionally charged. [It is] also governed by habit and [is] therefore difficult to control or modify" (ibid. 1451). Reasoning, on the other hand, is "slower, serial, effortful, and deliberately controlled; [it is] also relatively flexible and potentially rule governed" (ibid. 1451). Given that intuition is likely to be *emotionally charged* or that it may present itself in the form an emotion, one could consequently suggest that regardless of whether it acts as *judge* or *inventor*, its appearance during the translation process constitutes, however marginally or indirectly, an emotional experience.

In contrast to the first set of empirical accounts, the second one does not contain any reference to the translators' intuition participating in the translation process. Despite the fact that the scholars who belong to this particular category could have effortlessly used an all-encompassing term such as *intuition* when attempting to describe what it is that makes

translators react in an explosive, unexpected manner to the reception of particular stimuli from the ST, for some reason they opted to avoid it. Instead, they chose to engage in providing a more elaborated description of such incidents, often referring directly to the translators' emotions as their cause. Examples of such cases can be found respectively in Louise Hébert-Malloch's description, who points out in her article "What Do We Know About a Translator's Day?" that although there is no way of knowing exactly what the translator is thinking while translating, "sometimes a word or expression triggers an automatic response attributable to his upbringing, his training or his experience or a combination of these and/or other factors" (977) as well as in Gyde Hansen's account, who maintains that in every situation during the process of translation - "be it in connection with a problem or with a decision that has to be taken, or just in connection with some themes or words - a myriad of impulses in the form of images, experiences and emotions immediately and inevitably emerge" (516).

Considering both sets of writings collectively, one could suggest that there are arguably four main points that can be deduced from the aforementioned empirical scholars' accounts. The first one is that alongside what empirical researchers understand under "affective factors in translation", in other words the "involvement with the translation task, a relaxed atmosphere ... self-confidence" (Bernardini 185) and "security" (Tirkkonen-Condit 48), there appears to be a particular type of emotive interaction between texts and their translators that is not connected to the latter's confidence in their own abilities acquired by the repeated exposure to the same or similar situations nor to the positive attitude they are likely to adopt toward a particular task, or even for that matter to their intuition. Hébert-Malloch's reference to the translators' *upbringing* can be thought to indicate that during such interaction a variety of more personal or intimate factors influence the translators and their choices. In order to attempt to illustrate my understanding of how

during the process of transferring texts from one language into another the translator may opt for a linguistic choice that is related to a past experience of an emotional nature yet connected neither to his or her confidence in performing specific tasks nor derived from working conditions favourable to creativity, I will use an example from my personal experience as a practising translator. When working on the translation of Antony Beevor's work *Berlin: The Downfall, 1945* from English into Greek, my publisher and editor, Yiannis Govostis, insisted that I should render both *to begin* and *to start* as *αρχίζω* [ar<x>ízo] and not *ξεκινώ* [kse<k>inó] into Greek. I did not object to his linguistic preference despite the fact that the explanation he gave me for it, namely that *αρχίζω* is of Ancient Greek origin, was incorrect.¹³⁵ Reflecting after his recent death on my experience working with him, I came to realise that I had kept using his distinction in all other translations I was commissioned to carry out long after our collaboration had come to an end. Considering that I was aware of his etymological misconception and that I was no longer required to follow his instructions, I can only assume that the unconscious or subconscious choice to continue translating these verbs in the way he would have wanted me to resulted from a deeper need to somehow preserve his presence in my mind.

The second point is that, unlike in my recent experience, one cannot always define the origin of such unconscious choices. Despite the fact that both Hébert-Malloch and Hansen acknowledge that the translator's positioning towards particular words or expressions is likely to be connected to something past, neither scholar appears to be able to say with certainty when and why such a connection could have come about or to what such a predisposition might refer. Presumably not even the translators themselves would be able to offer an explicit justification for their choices, a testament perhaps to what Hönig had in mind when referring to their *intuition* or *language reflex* participating in the

¹³⁵ According to the dictionary of Manolis Triantafyllidis Institute, the verb *αρχίζω* has its roots in the Medieval or Byzantine Greek noun *αρχή*, i.e. the beginning (Τριανταφυλλίδης 211), whereas *ξεκινώ* comes from the Ancient Greek verb *εκκινώ*, i.e. to commence (ibid. 934).

translation process. A characteristic example of how, for reasons unknown to them, translators are likely to choose particular words over others can be found in Ros Schwartz's recorded conversation with Nicolas de Lange. Towards the end of their discussion Schwartz argues that during his collaboration with Steve Cox she came to the following realisation: "We both draw on very different linguistic sources, no doubt as a result of our different social backgrounds, education and the age gap between us. For example, one of us had a tendency to say 'start' and the other 'begin'" (19). Setting aside the remarkable coincidence between the example cases Schwartz brings forward and those of my own personal experience, one has to admit that even if one were to accept Schwartz's legitimate explanation that her and Cox's *tendency* to distinguish between the two synonymous verbs can be attributed to social, educational and generational reasons, there are several points that would arguably remain unknown: Was either one aware of their linguistic preference prior to their collaboration? Was either one in a position to point out the particular reasons that caused them to favour using the one word over the other in the first place? And in which cases and why have they or would they have chosen to break their habitual practice of using either word? In the case of Susan Bassnett, for example, who recognises in a more straightforward and conscious way that "the word 'uneasy' [is] so much part of [her] personal poetic lexicon" ("Writing and Translating" 182), one feels more confident in saying not only that she presumably has a more clear understanding of what it was that made her assign to the particular word an additional, strictly personal and evidently emotionally loaded meaning but also that she appears to be able to specify in which cases she would or would not be prepared to use it. Although one could hardly maintain that every single word used in a translation is to be thought of as charged with hidden emotional connotations, it is precisely the fact that one can so rarely pinpoint the source of one's linguistic choices that arguably constitutes reason enough for one to be attentive to the

emotive potential of any given word or expression.

The third point, returning to the findings of the empirical studies, concerns the strength of the aforementioned emotive interaction: the translator's emotions that emerge during the passive stage of reading the ST appear to be also carried over to the active stage of rendering it into the TL. Keeping in mind that the active-passive antithesis is being used here loosely, as one never ceases to be actively engaged with a text, one could suggest that Bill Findlay's account of his experience with Raymond Cousse's play *Enfantillages* may serve as an example of how a particular emotional reaction resulting from the reading of a text may also suggest or even dictate the strategy to be followed for the text's translation.¹³⁶

“As someone who grew up in a working-class family and community in a country village in Fife in the 1950's, I felt a personal identity with the play's period and milieu such that ... I initially 'heard' it in the Scots dialect of my own formative years. This instinctive response on first reading the play resolved into a deliberate one [to] build it into my Scots ... drawing on my observation of real speech as experienced in my formative years” (“Translating Standard into Dialect” 37-44).

Considering that Findlay's conscious decision to draw on his personal experiences and translate the play into *his* Scots did not precede but followed the, evidently, overwhelming emotional influence the reading of the play had on him, one could arguably suggest that, at least in this particular case, Hönig's distinction between the translators' *reflex* and their *reflection* could also be understood respectively as the translators' occasional inner urge to seek establishing not a linguistic but an emotional equivalence between the ST and the TT and the methodical thinking that allows or forbids them to do

¹³⁶ As Albrecht Neubert and Gregory M. Shreve point out “although text comprehension shares certain features with text production, it should be noted that the text comprehender does not simply reverse the progression of textual processing. ... The distinction, simply put, is one of meaning first (production) and meaning last (understanding). It is not a distinction between active sender and passive receiver; both are active participants in the textual process” (48).

so.¹³⁷

The last and perhaps most controversial observation regarding the translators' emotive interaction with the ST concerns the mechanics of its occurrence. Although, according to the scholars' accounts, emotions appear to participate in the process of rendering a text from one language into another as an impulse, as an uncontrolled, instinctive reaction triggered either by the stimuli the ST is likely to evoke or by the questions the text's reformulation into the TL may pose, one would be deeply skeptical about describing their emergence as *automatic*. In their seminal work *Protocol Analysis - Verbal Reports as Data*, K. Anders Ericsson and Herbert A. Simon argue that automaticity occurs primarily during the execution of what they refer to as "highly overlearned processes" (127) as a result of the subjects' "prior experience with the problem domain" (136). In a slightly different way, Janne Laukkanen argues that it is the translator's exposure to routine situations, which she defines as "the kind of task that is familiar to the subject from his/her daily work", that leads to automaticity (257). Non-routine situations, on the other hand, which Laukkanen understands as "practically any assignment that the subject is not very familiar with" (ibid. 257), tend respectively to slow down the translator's performance. Keeping in mind that our interest at this point is to explore the operational features of the occurrence of the translator's emotive reactions towards the text, there appear to be two problematic points about the concept of automaticity when thought of within the framework of translating prosaic, poetic or, in our case, dramatic works. The first one concerns the notion of the reaction's repetitiveness. To the extent that reacting to a stimulus in an automatic manner is considered to mean experiencing the same reaction

¹³⁷ In his work *The Translator's Turn*, Douglas Robinson argues that "the only person who would dare talk about equivalence in terms of feeling, intuition, body response, is a translator; and among translators, probably only a literary translator; and among literary translators, only a maverick poet with a reputation for erratic brilliance" (18). Although Robinson reserves his description for Ezra Pound, it is arguably not only *maverick poets* who are entitled to discuss the attainment of an emotional equivalence between two creations.

repeatedly, the way Findlay responded to Cousse's play can hardly be characterised as automatic: one could hardly argue that Findlay would have reacted in the same intimate manner if he were to have read another play by the same writer or another writer's play that was also set in the 1950's.

The second problematic point concerns the peculiarity of literary texts. Given the singularity or uniqueness of all dramatic, poetic or literary works, one could hardly suggest that the notion of being involved in their translation is compatible with the notion of performing a *routine* assignment. In a rather similar manner Silvia Bernardini objected to Laukkanen's distinction between familiar and unfamiliar types of situation maintaining that "the hypothesis that translators behave in different ways during routine and non-routine situations can only be tested by trying to control all variables apart from familiarity" (186). Since Laukkanen, Bernardini continues, does not specify whether *familiarity* and *routine* refer to the "content or form", to the "subject [or] text type" the translator is likely to be acquainted with, her suggestion remains ambiguous and its validation a "dismal endeavour" (ibid. 186). However, neither Bernardini's focus on the characteristics of the text appears to be in a position to solve the problem that the concept of repetitiveness of the translator's reaction poses when considered in terms of literary translation. The results would probably not be the anticipated ones even if one were to take into consideration the parameters she argues are missing from Laukkanen's suggestion and ask what, according to both Ericsson and Simon's and Laukkanen's argumentation, should be the epitome of automation, i.e. a translator highly experienced in a particular task performing just that particular task, to translate two different texts that have the same form, are written on the same subject and belong to the same text type. The fact that Jean Racine's dramatic works are composed of rhyming alexandrine couplets does not mean that a translator who has been *routinely* involved in the translation of his tragedies from French into his or her mother tongue will

react in any way more automatically when translating a tragedy by Pierre Corneille, who also wrote during the 17th century and used the particular type of syllabic verse in his plays.

Considering this, one could consequently suggest that either there is no repetitive reaction of emotive content taking place in the process of translating literary texts or that if it does exist after all, then it would probably not be evident during the actual process of transferring texts from one language into another but rather either before or after the execution of the particular task. An example of such an automatic reaction can be arguably found in Jakob Kenda's *switching off* method. During his devised process of achieving the necessary level of concentration needed for translating, Kenda "distances [him]self from the more automated thought processes, by dispersing [his] consciousness outside [him]self ... by going into some kind of a slumber from which [he is] guiding the automaton, left in front of the computer" (160). As he narrates, once his relaxation and concentration process is concluded, he finds himself in a "homely state of being" feeling comfortable and secure as he is "more familiar with the sources" that are at his disposal (161). Given that Kenda repeats the same warming-up process prior to commencing on translating any given literary text and that the results of the process are consistently the same, one could be led to argue that the translator's emotions which can be repeatedly triggered, and therefore be characterised as automatic, are those related to what was referred to earlier as *affective factors* in translation.

To the extent that the indications of the empirical studies on translation can be argued to confirm that translators interact with a literary work on a deeper, emotional level and that this intimate contact, although not always traceable back to its origins, is likely to be so powerful as to act as a determining agent during the process of the text's reformulation in the TL, the question that is unavoidably raised is whether similar indications are also to be found in theoretical studies on translation that could in turn lead

to similar conclusions. In other words, do translators engage with the text in such a manner in disregard of or in compliance with the theory of translation? Considering Tirkkonen-Condit and Laukkanen's reference to each translator's individual strategy as "subjective theories of translation" (45), one could argue that the answer to this question is to be found in the *objective theories of translation*, in other words in the descriptive or prescriptive accounts of the process of translating put forward by translation studies scholars and practitioners.¹³⁸ Despite the fact that one rarely comes across discussions of the translators' inner processes in such accounts, there are arguably two distinct sets of theoretical writings that stand out. As was the case with the empirical accounts of the translation process, the theoretical ones can also be divided into those characterised by their references (however subtle these may be) either to the translators' emotions or to their psychology, and those that talk about the translators' intuition.

In his work *The Art of Translation*, Theodore Savory, for example, argues that the problem literary translators face is threefold, as they need to answer the following questions: "What does the author say? What does he mean? How does he say it?" (27). Discussing the way the answer to the third question is to be approached, Savory maintains that on the translator's reformulation choices in the TL depend "equally [the] conveyance of meaning and [the] conveyance of [the author's] style" (ibid, 28). Style, according to Savory, is to be understood as "the outcome of the writer's personality and his emotions at the moment" (ibid. 55). Granted, however, that "what is true for the author is also true for the translator", as Savory goes on to argue, and that the latter's choices as a writer being "influenced by his own personality, cannot but reflect, though dimly, his own style", one could suggest that the acclaimed scholar leaves room for emotions to be considered as a

¹³⁸ I chose to use *strategy* instead of *method* following Lörscher's definition of the latter as "algorithms, ... supraindividual, tried and tested procedures with which goals can be achieved with a high degree of probability" and the former as "more individual by their very nature ... select[ing] from the resources available to an individual those means which are considered to be the most suitable and/or effective for achieving the given aim" (68).

potential tool for translating (ibid. 55). The translator's emotions appear to be present also in George Steiner's four-step hermeneutic approach to the translation of literary texts, which, according to the scholar, consists of the stages of "initiative trust, penetration, embodiment and restitution" (319). Discussing the fourth step of *embodiment*, Steiner argues that when transferring texts from one language into another, translators "come to incarnate alternative energies and resources of feelings" (ibid. 315). In what could be described as a warning on Savory's certainty about the survival of the translator's distinguishing traits in the TT, however marginal this may be, Steiner cautions that it is not unlikely for such an intake of the original creation's *energies* and *feelings* to lead to the suffocation of the translators' own voice as they "may be mastered and made lame by what [they] have imported" (ibid, 315). In a manner similar to Willard Trask, who maintains that translating entails a *psychological workout*, and to John Rutherford, who argues that "literary translation is by no means a purely cerebral activity" (76), Peter Newmark also describes translating as a "psychological process" (*Approaches to Translation* 98).¹³⁹ Despite the fact that "the mental torture, the long obsession with words and facts, the maze, the continually jostled kaleidoscope, the chess-game [and] the sudden eureka relief", which Newmark brings forward in his account as some of the many "facets" of the *psychology* of translating, could arguably be interpreted as instances of what appears to be a primarily intellectual cognition action followed by or, perhaps better put, causing an emotional reaction, one could suggest that considering translation as a rolling ball sculpture or a marble run, these emotions will find themselves also guiding the process of transferring texts from one language into another (ibid. 98). In other words, the *relief* of finding a suitable word or expression in TL, which followed the *mental torture* of searching for one, will presumably in turn also fill the translator with *optimism* or *confidence* before he or she

¹³⁹ Trask's full quotation is to be found in the Introduction of this thesis.

sets out to find the next one. Emotions are also present in Paul Kussmaul's understanding of the translation process. Building his approach on Poincaré's four-phase segmentation of the creative process into "preparation, incubation, illumination [and] evaluation" and putting it to the test using semi-professional translators (*Training the Translator* 40), Kussmaul noted that there were strong indications of an emotional involvement on behalf of the participants both during the second stage of the translation process, which aims at producing "a large number of thoughts, associations or ideas for a given problem" (ibid, 41), and also during the third one, where ideas seem "to occur all of a sudden as if by inspiration" ("Creativity in the Translation Process" 97). The translators' "creative process", the scholar concludes, "as most mental activities, is not only governed by intellect but also by emotion" (*Training the Translator* 48).

In addition to her description of six steps involved in the translation of any given text from one language into another, which were presented in the introductory chapter on drama translation, Marilyn Gaddis Rose also argues that "translators, more often than not, work intuitively" and that it is their "intuition and taste" which, functioning as an artistic sensor, help them obviate answering the question "'what makes [a particular] literary text literary?'" (1-2). In a similar manner to Hönig's understanding of the translation process as an interaction between cognitive and intuitive processes, Peter Bush also argues that it is the intuition together with the imagination and the intellect of the translator which "must not be lost to the disembodied abstraction which is often described as 'translation'" of literary texts ("Literary Translation Practices" 127). Kussmaul appears to share Bush's concerns and in his work *Training the Translator* he explores how translators' trainers may develop their pupils' intuition as well as their imagination:

"One may, of course, hold the opinion that translating is an intuitive process, inspired, perhaps, by the translator's creative gift. But can we teach intuition? We may be

able to create an atmosphere favourable to intuition. But when it comes to deciding which of the various ideas that have come to our minds should be chosen, intuition will have to be counterbalanced by reflection, at least if we want to carry conviction with our students” (3).

Despite the fact that the way Kussmaul appears to be tackling intuition in translation bears a remarkable resemblance to the way Stanislavsky approached the notion of inspiration within the framework of the actor’s creative process, one could hardly suggest that the emphasis the latter placed on emotions occupies an equally central position in the theory of translation. Admittedly, none of the indications emanating from any of the aforementioned theoretical scholars’ accounts can be used to support in a categorical manner the idea that emotions are to be counted as constituent elements of the translation process. That it is not to say, however, that they emphatically deny their presence and role either. In other words, one is left with the impression that in a similar manner to the Ancient Athenians who devoted an altar to the unknown God or to the Archaic Latin *si deus si dea*, translation theory appears to be cautious enough to recognise yet not name, to neither include nor exclude the translators’ ability to receive and transmit the content and form of the ST through their senses as part of the process of transferring texts from one language into another. Insofar as one could take advantage of this lack of clarity, one could consequently suggest that both empiricism and theory appear to be in favour of the notion that translating is subjected also to the translators’ ability to both decode and encode the ST using some capacity other than their intellect. Given such consensus, what needs to be considered next is in which direction the deliberate use of this capacity is to be aimed at. In other words, granted that translators use their emotions during the process of transferring texts between languages, what or whom do they need to attempt to approach through them? What arguably necessitates such discussion is a clear dissension that exists among translators.

As was indicated in the introduction of this thesis, while some translation scholars and practitioners maintain that the translator needs to empathise with the author of the ST, others suggest that it ought to be the fictional characters in the author's work that translators need to concentrate their attention on. In his work *Sketches From a Library Window*, Basil Anderton, for example, compares the translator with an actor having to "impersonate the characters" (66). Michael Frayn maintains that "translating a play is rather like writing one" and that it "involves inhabiting [each] character, or trying to, as if he were one's own" (204). For Anthony Vivis the first step when translating for the stage involves "get[ting] to know the characters. Who are they, how do they relate to each other and us, the audience, who are strangers to them?" (38). In a similar manner John Clifford argues that the translator's "basic creative task [is] to feel with the characters, become the characters" (266) and Anthea Bell suggests that the translator "like an actor ... pretend[s] to be all sorts of different people, thinking [his/her] way into their minds and ... saying in English what they have said in their own language" (65).

Vladimir Nabokov, on the other hand, focuses his attention on the relation between the translator and the author of the source text by arguing that the former "must possess the gift of mimicry and be able to act, as it were, the real author's part by impersonating his tricks of demeanor and speech, his ways and his mind, with the utmost degree of verisimilitude" (319). In a rather similar fashion, Eugene Nida argues that "the ideal role of the translator calls for a person who has [an] effective empathy with the original author and the content" (*Toward a Science of Translating* 151). Despite the fact that empathy is the common divisor of both lines of argumentation, there are admittedly several differences to be found between attempting to emotionally approach an author or a playwright on the one hand and that same author's or playwright's characters on the other. Starting with the former case, one could argue that, speaking in purely practical terms, translators appear to

have at their disposal three possible ways to gain emotional access to the creator of a literary or dramatic work.

The first way would be to attempt to reconstruct the creator's personality, experiences and intentions by using the source text itself as well as the author's biographical data as their source. This particular pathway raises two problems for the translator when considered in the case of theatre. The first problem is that it automatically and unavoidably limits the number of playwrights who can be approached in the particular manner to those whose creations fulfil the above criteria. Consequently one would have to exclude plays that are, for example, the works of more than one or even of unknown creators. One would similarly have to exclude plays which belong to cultural movements that aimed at "the desacralization of the image of the Author" as was the case with Surrealism, for example, which, as Roland Barthes points out, "ceaselessly recommend[ed] the abrupt disappointment of expectations of meaning ... by entrusting the hand with the task of writing as quickly as possible what the head is unaware of" (144).

The second problem is that even for those plays that were created by a single author for whom biographical information is available, one would be reluctant to suggest that the text may serve as a source for reconstructing its creator's personality. As Formalist Barthes points out in the epigraph of his essay "The Death of the Author", one cannot be sure, for example, who is it that "describes a castrato disguised as a woman" in Honoré de Balzac's novel *Sarrasine*:

"Is it the hero of the story bent on remaining ignorant of the castrato hidden beneath the woman? Is it Balzac the individual, furnished by his personal experience with a philosophy of Woman? Is it Balzac the author professing 'literary' ideas on femininity? Is it universal wisdom? Romantic psychology? We shall never know" (ibid 142).

Barthes's objection to the incorporation of the intentions and biographical context

of an author in the interpretation of his or her work were at large anticipated by the philosophy of New Criticism, a dominant trend in literary criticism of the mid twentieth century. In a manner similar to Barthes's yet nearly twenty years earlier than the French philosopher, two of New Criticism's major adherents, W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley, had also pointed out in their seminal essay "The Intentional Fallacy" that "the design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as a standard for judging the success of a work of literary art" (3). New Criticism and Formalism's rejection of the notion of the author's intentionality unavoidably exerted a great influence over the discipline of translation studies, leading prominent translation scholars such as Susan Bassnett-McGuire to argue that "the question of the original author's intention is just a red herring. Literary criticism moved past the idea of intentionality a long time ago, and translation would be greatly helped if translators could move past it also" ("The Translator in the Theatre" 40). Accordingly, Edwin Gentzler rejects Nida's earlier mentioned call for *effective empathy* with the creator of the ST, which according to the latter is necessary particularly when it comes to "the translation of highly 'personal messages', as in lyric poetry" (*Toward a Science of Translating* 152-153). For Gentzler

"... the problem with such a requirement is one literary critics refer to as the intentional fallacy: what a work says and what the author intended it to say are two different things. Such empathy as Nida seems to favor in fact may serve to obscure that which is being translated" (57).

Despite Gentzler's dismissal of Nida's advocated *empathy* with the creator of the ST due to its questionable "devotion to and dependence upon the original author's intent" (ibid, 57), Nida's suggestion offers itself to a different interpretation. Considering it in combination with the scholar's apodictic statement that "no translator can avoid a certain degree of emotional involvement in his work" (*Toward a Science of Translating* 154), one

could be led to suggest that Nida's understanding of *empathy* is not that of "a cognitive awareness and understanding of the emotions and feelings" but that of "a vicarious affective response to the emotional experiences" of another person (Reber 249). If that is indeed the case, then Nida's suggestion lies arguably closer to the notion of the "deep personal and literary affinit[y]" which Haskell M. Block maintains that Gérard de Nerval experienced towards Heinrich Heine, Charles Baudelaire towards Edgar Allan Poe and André Gide towards the authors he choose to translate (119).

This *affinity* or, differently put, the possibility of approaching the creator of the original by means other than using the particular work one is asked to translate as a source of insight, constitutes the second pathway that is likely to lead the translator emotionally closer to the ST author or playwright. The premises of such an expectation could also be diagnosed, for example, in Richard Wilbur's acknowledgement that he "couldn't imagine beginning to translate anybody living or dead without at least having the illusion of some kind of personal understanding ... of the range of his feelings beyond the particular work" (82). Considering how this knowledge from without could be acquired, one could suggest that Horst Frenz's advice to the translator to "attempt to see what the author saw, to hear what he heard, to dig into his own life in order to experience anew what the author experienced" (94) offers itself as an excellent starting point. Despite its Stanislavskian, or rather Tolstoyan overtones, however, Frenz's suggestion is admittedly rather problematic, particularly if taken literally. It could lead the translator to a similar experience with the adventures of the protagonist in Jorge Luis Borges's short story *Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote*, who "sets to work systematically, learning sixteenth century Spanish, getting himself captured by the Moors, losing an arm and in every detail recreating the life Cervantes lived" firmly believing that "without [a] total recreation" of the Spanish author's life (Bassnett, "Intricate Pathways" 1) he would not be able to "produce pages which would

coincide - word for word and line for line – with those of Miguel de Cervantes” (Borges 49). Needless to say, however ingenious it may have been for Borges to call into question “the notions of the distinctiveness of original and copy, or of writer and translator” by having a fictional character undergo such an experience, Pierre Menard’s adventures are thankfully inapplicable in real life (Bassnett, “Intricate Pathways” 1).

When thought of in a more moderate and less life-threatening manner, on the other hand, Frenz’s proposal seems to be arguably closer to the “travel[s] to the author’s country”, which alongside undertaking a historical and literary study of works written by the author’s contemporaries, constitute, according to Peter Bush, part of some translators’ “essential preparation” prior to embarking upon transferring a text from one language into another (129). Such an instance can be found in the case of John Felstiner who in his work *Translating Neruda: The Way to Macchu Picchu* describes “his immersion in the work and culture of the ST author, including visits to Macchu Picchu itself and his reading of Neruda’s poem in that environment” (Munday 152). Robert Fitzgerald’s description of his experience living in Greece while working on Homer’s *Odyssey*, given as part of an interview with Edwin Honig, may serve as an example of how a deeper connection with the author may be achieved not through the text but through the environment of its creation.

“There are changes of light on landscapes and changes of direction of the wind and the force of the wind and weather. That whole scene is too important in Homer to neglect. I think it was lucky that during most of the work on the *Odyssey* I lived on Homer’s sea in houses that were, in one case, shaken by the impact of the Mediterranean winter storms on the rocks below, and the constant visual presence of those seascapes may have had something to do with the way in which that poem came to be” (108).

Upon listening to Fitzgerald’s narration, Honig acknowledges that he was also conscious of the “relation between place and poetic invention” in his own work. In a similar manner to Fitzgerald, Honig also narrates that reading the news of the 1958 flood in

Mallorca, where he happened to be when translating some of Cervantes's farces, gave him a "certain sense" of the "flood that annually overflows the banks of the Guadalquivir in Seville" about which Cervantes talks in one of his *Novelas ejemplares* (ibid 109). "There was a certain sense in which my being there", concludes Honig, "made a bridge between Cervantes's text and my bringing his words over into English" (ibid. 109).

What appears to be arguably problematic about the particular pathway is not only that, conversely to the previous one, it offers an extremely wide field of information for translators to cover but also that in addition to the mental leaps necessary, it also requires actual steps to be taken towards the same end. In other words, the translator cannot simply imagine the playwright walking around the site of Macchu Picchu but he or she also has to travel there. Moreover, even if a translator were to be willing and able to familiarise him- or herself at first hand with the author's native environment, it is not certain that his or her efforts would definitely have the desired results. Despite the fact that the Mediterranean scenery and the news of the flood were apparently enough for Fitzgerald and Honig momentarily to catch a glimpse, respectively, of Homer and Cervantes's immediate apperceptions and thereby to acquire a sense of emotional or even physical nearness to the particular authors, one would hardly argue that the same conditions are likely to have the same effect on any other given translator or even on the aforementioned translators for a second time.

The third pathway that is likely to help the translator come emotionally closer to the author of the original creation is to directly seek his or her help. As Peter Bush points out,

"... in the case of a living author, a range of collaborative possibilities offer themselves [for the translator]. Some authors enjoy participation in the translation to the extent that the final fruit of the collaboration is a new work in which they extend and add new sections. Others may add marginal commentaries to a draft" ("Literary Translation Practices" 129).

Josephine Balmer elaborates on Bush's suggestion listing some of the benefits of a potential author-translator collaboration: "complicated semantic or grammatical terms can be explained and discussed, the author's original intentions can be determined, seemingly impenetrable culturally specific references and their resonances can be explained" (185). Whereas such a harmonious joining of forces could undoubtedly lead to the translator's better understanding of both creator and creation as they would "not have to fictionalise their source's thought patterns" (Zatlin 7), what Bush and Balmer are arguably leaving out of their descriptions is that the authors of the original text do not always respond in a generous manner. As Jacek Laskowski points out,

"... like all authors living playwrights can become unreasonably attached to a choice of individual words. Not to mention jokes. For a translator to change, or even throw out, an author's joke because it is so bad that the translator can't bring himself to repeat it could, I've no doubt, destroy friendships and ruin exemplary working relationships" (196).

Laskowski does admittedly have a point in suggesting that it is not uncommon for a creator to finding it hard to accept any type of alternation of or intervention on his or her work. Although Ben Belitt may be right in his assertion that "no one is more tolerant of a translation ... than the poet translated" (74), cases such as that of Chekhov, who "wished he could have prevented his plays from being translated and performed outside Russia", and Pirandello, who "raged against what he saw as the betrayal of his plays, not only by translators but in the first instance by actors" may be thought to indicate that at least playwrights do not always respond with similar tolerance (Bassnett, "Still Trapped in the Labyrinth" 91). Despite this, one could still suggest that as long as the translator does not share with the author of the original his or her considerations or decisions regarding the translation of his or her work and aims instead merely at understanding the thoughts, ideas

or experiences that led to the work's creation, the translator-author collaboration may still have a chance to succeed. Unfortunately, this is, yet again, not always the case. The creator's reaction, even if not necessarily negative, remains at best unpredictable. Willard Trask, for example, narrates that when he met Erich Auerbach and asked him to clarify the meaning of some of the passages in his work *Mimesis*, Auerbach bluntly responded, "Quite frankly, I don't remember what I was trying to say", and then said "something else instead for [Trask] to translate" (15). In a rather opposite manner Stanislavsky describes in his autobiography *My Life in Art* how his own relentless questioning about the meaning of particular lines and passages in *Uncle Vanya* led the play's creator, Anton Chekhov, to insist that there was nothing that needed explaining: "Look, I wrote it down; it's all there," Chekhov exploded in frustration, "Everything is said there. You didn't read the play" (361-362).

Considering the difficulties that are likely to arise when attempting to emotionally approach the creator of the original, one could suggest that trying to get under the characters' skin instead appears to be a more viable solution for the translator. In the exact opposite manner to the case of the playwright, entering and experiencing first-hand the characters' fictional world does not require leaving one's workspace – their past, present and future can safely be moulded in one's imagination in accordance with the needs of each performance or the interpretation of the director without running the risk of being right or wrong, accurate or inaccurate, as can also be the spatiotemporal conditions of the play's action. To put it differently, contrary to the constraints imposed by the actuality of a playwright's life, the life of a play's characters can provide the translator with the much preferable freedom and flexibility the realm of imagination enjoys. Yet how translators emotionally approach a play's characters?

Reflecting on Stanislavsky's argumentation one could suggest that what enables his

actors to establish an emotional relationship with a play's fictional characters is the latter's perception and treatment as real human beings. By considering, for example, Romeo merely as a man in love and not as the poetic, mythical protagonist in a story, it becomes easier for a Stanislavskian actor to feel closer to Shakespeare's creation and consequently confident enough to use his own experiences for the character's portrayal on the stage. The following two drama translators' accounts can be argued to contain indications of a similar process of character humanisation taking place when transferring dramatic texts from one language into another.

The first one comes from Liz Lochhead who points out in the introduction to her translation of Moliere's *Tartuffe* that the language she used for her work was "based on Byron, Burns, Stanley Holloway, Odgen Nash and George Formby, as well as the sharp tongue of [her] granny" (qtd. in Findlay, "Translating into Dialect" 202). The second one comes from Phyllis Zatlin who, in a rather complementary manner to Lochhead's account, describes in her work *Theatrical Translation and Film Adaptation: A Practitioner's View* that when she was confronted with the three female characters of different generations in Jean Bouchaud's play *Is That How It Was?* she similarly chose to turn to her immediate environment to find a proper voice for them:

"For the elderly mother, the idiolect I sought was my mother's remembered voice; the voice of the middle-aged woman was mine; for the young woman, I mentally heard my daughter speak the lines. I suspect that all practicing theatrical translators similarly cast the parts they are translating to hear the several voices clearly. The voices might be those of family and friends, or of people we hear speaking in the street or on television, or they might be those of actors who would be suitable for the roles and whose performance style comes to mind" (78).

As is arguably evident, what the aforementioned accounts have in common is the translators' conscious evocation of the language or tone of voice of someone with whom

they felt or actually were familiar and the subsequent use of those figures' characteristics as a tool for dealing with the characters' lines. Considering in particular Zatlin's description, one could suggest that the auditory presence of these familiar figures may also be accompanied by their visual presence in the translator's mind. Furthermore, despite the fact that Lochhead used only the language of her grandmother and Zatlin borrowed merely the voice of her mother and daughter, one could rather safely assume that it is not unlikely for the translator to borrow both the voice and language as well as the image of a single familiar figure for the imaginary portrayal of a particular character. Translators are, of course, not the only ones employing such a borrowing technique. Playwrights draw on similarly close sources to themselves for the creation of their characters. According to John Clifford, for example, "in his lecture on 'The poetic image in Góngora'" Federico García Lorca mentions that "the way people in Andalusia actually used to speak" offered him "an incredibly rich source of poetic imagery" (266). Michael Tremblay also points out that "he had packed ... virtually every expression he had ever heard his mother say" in his play *Les Belles-Sœurs* (qtd. in Bowman 27). Finally, in his article on "The Nature of Theatre Dialogue", Arnold Wesker uses the way his father's sister used to speak in order to illustrate to his readers "the way [he] think[s] about dialogue" (368).

Insofar as Zatlin is right in her presumption that all translators for the stage perform similar castings when confronted with a playwright's characters and to the extent that Lochhead's case can be argued to indicate that this imaginary cast lends more than its voice for the lines' delivery, one could arguably recognise in the drama translators' practice the germ of what constitutes for Stanislavsky's actors the first step towards establishing an emotional contact with the dramatic characters. By having, for example, one's family relatives cast in the role of the characters it ceases to be Romeo or Shakespeare who speaks, two distant and untouchable figures. In their minds translators are confronted instead with

someone more easily reachable, more accessible, someone to whom they can both cognitively and emotionally relate. What enables their cognitive and emotional contact with this *someone* is not only the figure's recognisable tone of voice but also the fact that the figure is entitled to speak using, among others, both his or her own familiar as well as Romeo or Shakespeare's unfamiliar language.

That is not to say, however, that translators lose sight of the dramatic characters or their language. In a similar manner to the actor who having realised that the character of Schlink in Brecht's play *Im Dickicht der Städte* "seemed to read like Charlie Chan ... he could then build a performance", as Steeve Gooch narrates (16-17), these familiar figures appear to serve not as substitutes for the dramatic personae but rather as intermediaries between them and the translator, as catalysts enabling and accelerating the communication process with the playwright's creation. In other words, translators seem to be using them in their mind as actors performing the characters' parts while reserving for themselves the role either of one of the characters or, most commonly, that of the director.

Despite its apparent closeness to Stanislavsky's reasoning, what appears to be problematic about the humanisation process of the dramatic personae as performed by the translators is that it does not appear to include the principle of the artist's direct emotional contact with the original creation which the System specifically calls for. Elaborating on Stanislavsky's observation that even "a régisseur ... should to some extent be an actor in his own right" (*An Actor's Handbook* 48), Vakhtangov maintains that "before a director can start rehearsing, he has to *live* (that is, play) all the roles in his mind. And how can he do it if he has never been an actor himself?" (qtd. in Gorchakov 64). There are two important points in the suggestions put forward by Stanislavsky and his most prominent pupil that need to be noticed. The first one is that in a similar manner to the actors who need to personally explore all of a play's characters, directors cannot confine themselves to

approaching only those, for example, whom they feel closer to. They, too, need to understand in equal depth all of the dramatic personae in a playwright's work regardless of whether their contribution to the development of the action is of primary or secondary importance. The second important point is that the way a director approaches a play's characters cannot be any different than that of an actor. Despite the fact that the director will not need to perform any of them, he or she needs to have experienced, to have *lived* or *played* as Vakhtangov puts it, all of them in his or her mind following for each one the same creative process an actor follows initially for all characters and subsequently for the one he or she will be finally portraying in the play's performance.

Transposing both suggestions back into Zatlin's case one could consequently argue that, according to the System's reasoning, she would have needed to cast herself in all the roles of the play and not just that of the middle-aged woman. That is not to say, however, that Zatlin would simply have needed to use her own voice for the delivery of the dramatic characters' lines in her mind prior to borrowing the voice of her mother and daughter just as she would have done if she had been an actress cast in either role. Following the second point in the Stanislavsky-Vakhtangov argumentation she would also have needed to experience all three roles *herself* before deciding whom from her environment she would assign each one to. Yet although Stanislavsky's actors eventually enter the stage of self-experiencing in order to gradually take the characters' place in the fictional world of the play, it is not clear whether that stage of coalescence can be argued to constitute also a part of the translators' creative process. Were one to judge solely from their accounts, one would be led to argue that it is the characters' external perception and portrayal which translators appear to be primarily preoccupied with. For Willi Zurbrüggen, for example, "getting inside the character", particularly in the case of dialogues," means for a translator to imagine "how exactly does [he] talk at this moment, does he grin or laugh when he says

[a particular line]” (qtd. in Kohlmayer, “Die Implizite Theorie” 335).¹⁴⁰ In a similar manner De Lange’s attempt to imagine whether the character would say *radio* or *wireless*, Pelletier’s advice to the translators to listen to the characters’ voice with their mind’s ear, the *mind theatre* of Paul Frank and Kohlmayer or Scheffel’s *mind movie* that translators watch with their inner eye appear also to position the translator not inside but rather outside the dramatic characters’ skin.

Even the case of Findlay’s emotional response to Cousse’s play, where one would feel more confident to suggest that at least in the particular instance the translator, regardless of whether accidentally and not through conscious processing, did manage to *experience* the dramatic work’s characters in accordance with the System’s dictums, appears to be problematic: Findlay may have instantly recognised in the play’s dramatic characters several familiar figures from his formative years, such as the priest, the headmaster, the police officer etc, and have empathised with them but he arguably did so externally, from the perspective of the young boy who got to know them while growing up. That is not to say, however, that he also experienced inwardly each character’s given circumstances, in other words what it meant to lead, for example, the life of the particular fictional doctor or butcher at the place and time where the play’s action is set. A similar observation could also be made about Meyer-Clason’s suggestion regarding translators having to have at their disposal an array of vocal and linguistic details for the portrayal of the playwright’s characters: however helpful it might be for their authentic linguistic depiction to know which words a *toilet lady* or an *anti-nuclear activist* would use to give voice to their thoughts and emotions, one could hardly suggest that expressional accuracy can be considered as a synonym for having an understanding of another person’s life. Furthermore, considering that Meyer-Clason’s proposal comes admittedly dangerously

¹⁴⁰ The quotation reads in the original German: “Wie spricht er jetzt genau, grinst er oder lächelt er dabei, wenn er das sagt”.

close to being thought of as promoting the mere reproduction of stereotypical linguistic patterns, it should be remembered that such practice would be unacceptable from a Stanislavskian perspective. As Stanislavsky pointed out to his pupils, any attempt to approach “the complex inner processes of artistic emotion from the outside ... imitating only the external result” is the work of “craftsmen” and as such cannot be considered as suitable for the artists of the *theatre of experiencing* (“On Various Trends” 142). Yet does this mean that it is impossible for a drama translator to achieve a Stanislavskian fusion with a playwright’s characters? Is there something in the nature of their task that may prohibit translators from experiencing what clearly constitutes a *sine qua non* for a Stanislavskian artist? Simulating their attempt to delve into the dramatic characters in a manner similar to the Stanislavsky’s actors may reveal what problems translators are likely to be confronted with.

Given that translators have followed Stanislavsky’s methodology so far, one could suggest, building on their practice of having familiar figures playing the characters’ parts in their minds, that the next step towards self-experiencing the characters’ situation would be to have these figures replaced by themselves so as to establish a direct relationship with the characters. In order to successfully project themselves into the characters’ life, however, translators would unavoidably also need to answer Stanislavsky and Vakhtangov’s questions, which, as was mentioned earlier, aim at helping the System’s actors establish a contact between their own life and that of their part as well as overcome any experiential or emotional gaps that are likely to separate them from the dramatic characters. Reformulating these questions for the case of translation and placing them opposite the corresponding original ones would lead us to the following table:

	<u>Stanislavsky</u>	<u>Vakhtangov</u>
<u>Actor</u>	a. If I were the character how would I have done what he/she does? b. If I were the character what would I have done?	c. In order to do what the character does, what needs to have happened to me?
<u>Translator</u>	a. If I were the character how would I have said in the TL what he/she says in the SL? b. If I were the character what would I have said in the TL?	c. In order to say in the TL what the character says in the SL, what needs to have happened to me?

Considering the first Stanislavskian question (a) that translators would be called to answer, one must admit that it does not appear to vary significantly from what one would presume they ask themselves during the course of their normal practice: how to say in one language what someone else says in a different one. What may be considered as a slightly different angle is that instead of trying to imagine how someone else would formulate the characters' lines in the TL, translators are now asked to use their own language for the lines' rendering. They are asked, in other words, to project themselves linguistically into the characters' situation. Applying such a suggestion back to Lochhead's case, for example, would mean that she needed to ask herself not 'How would *we*' or 'How would *my granny* say this' but rather 'Given the circumstances of the character, how would *I* have said it?'. That is not to say, of course, that translators cannot borrow the language of someone else. In the same manner that a young actor may observe and copy, for example, the external characteristics of an older man's way of walking in order to help himself with the portrayal

of an elderly dramatic character¹⁴¹, translators too may draw on as many linguistic sources as they believe could be of assistance or even use directly the language of a real-life person that fits the fictional characters' profile, as Meyer-Clason suggests. However, just as the actor will need to adapt the old man's movements to his own body and vice versa, translators too, following Stanislavsky's reasoning, will need to sift through the linguistic input of others using their own language as a filter.

Stanislavsky's second question (b) appears to serve a slightly different role. The change from *how* to *what* in his formulation refers not to the characters' scripted but rather to their unscripted actions. The actor is, in other words, requested to act and react as the character yet without the help of particular guidelines given either by the playwright or by the director. Again this does not appear to be a situation that translators are likely to be unfamiliar with. The case of the language of the target culture having little, if any, help to offer to the rendering of a word or an expression from the SL constitutes the rule rather than the exception in translation practice, particularly perhaps when dealing with literary, poetic or dramatic works. What needs to be noticed, however, is that according to Stanislavsky's reasoning, any decision the translator may choose to make needs to have stemmed directly from his or her own personal experiences as these would have been selected and appropriated to the case of the dramatic character.

As far as Vakhtangov's question is concerned (c), one could suggest that it appears to function as a safety clause insuring that the actor's actions will not diverge from the predestined course of the character's actions. A corresponding case of resistance within the framework of translation can be arguably identified in the example Laskowski puts forward about the translator who cannot bring him- or herself to translate a playwright's joke. Following Vakhtangov's reasoning, however, the particular translator would have needed

¹⁴¹ In his work *Building A Character*, Stanislavsky offers a most vivid description of the manner in which an older person takes a seat, walks etc. and how the actor can apply these features to his or her own body (31-35).

to reproduce the joke in the TL despite his reservations, just like the actress who needs to overcome her contempt for Medea's decision to kill her children and to justify her deed in order to be able to portray her on the stage. Although Vakhtangov's suggestion could be thought to be repressing the translators' creativity, one could also interpret it not as a rejection of their ability to take initiatives but rather as an attempt to disengage them from the observer's position. Keeping in mind the System's preoccupation with bringing the actor as close as possible to the dramatic character, one could, in other words, argue that the objective of Vakhtangov's proposal when conceived within the framework of translation is to keep the translators' point of view on the character's side and not allow it to slip to that of the director or the receptors of the playwright's work. It is of that slip that Vakhtangov warned also his own student-actors: "God forbid that your actor's eye, which helps you to 'associate' with your colleagues on the stage, should turn, even for a minute, into a director's eye, which watches your partner and encourages or criticises him" (qtd. in Gorchakov 64). Considering the absolute commitment to the exploration of the characters that both Vakhtangov and Stanislavsky demanded from their actors, particularly when they were on stage playing or rehearsing them, one could consequently argue that from the System's perspective all of a character's lines would need to be translated within the course of approaching the particular character regardless whether at a later stage it will be decided to have some of them eliminated from the final TL version of the text.

What strikes one admittedly as particularly interesting with regard to the challenges the Stanislavsky-Vakhtangov questionnaire poses for the translator is that none of them appears to be formidable. Although the level of personal association and involvement with the dramatic characters that Stanislavsky expects from his actors is admittedly extremely high, at first glance it does not seem to be forbiddingly so for a drama translator to acquire as well. Keeping in mind the translators' advocated need for empathy with the dramatic

personae, one could consequently suggest that aside from being highly desirable, the coalescence with the dramatic characters gives the impression of also being feasible. Despite appearances, however, there are two problematic points that are likely to render the translator's transformation into a Stanislavskian actor unattainable.

The first one concerns the multiple roles the translator is called upon to play in the theatre and the unavoidable conflicts that occur during their execution. Following Stanislavsky's reasoning, the translators' first role calls for them to assume the part of the performers. Yet contrary to the case of the System's actors, who once having established the mandatory contact with all of the fictional world's inhabitants, can concentrate their attention on the approach and portrayal of only one of them, translators cannot think about one character and expect someone else to do the same about each of the remaining ones. In other words, translators unavoidably stand not in a one-to-one but rather in a one-to-many relationship to the dramatic personae. This consequently means that however comfortably they may explore and experience the situation of each of the characters separately, as Stanislavsky envisions his actors doing, every time two or more characters coexist and interact on the stage, translators would need not only to switch back and forth in their mind between their personalities but more importantly to do so isolating each time the opposite character's thoughts, emotions etc.; something akin to having to play chess against oneself in one's mind.

Although on the surface such a challenging task may seem to be the job of a director, one needs to keep in mind that once having approached as an actor in his or her mind all of a dramatic work's characters, the director can step back when the play's rehearsals begin to observe the actors perform them. A translator, however, cannot assign the execution of the translation entirely to someone else and await its results. This unavoidably means that in addition to having to think themselves into and out of each

character's skin for everything they do or say on and off stage, translators will also need to maintain the position of a passive observer who is entrusted not only with evaluating the truthfulness of the characters' interaction but also with overseeing the entire presentation of the spectacle. In order to be able to carry out these responsibilities, however, the particular *observer* needs to be an informed one, that is he or she has to know beforehand what will happen and when. As such he or she has to be distinguished from the uninformed receiver of the play who does not know what will happen when he or she comes to the theatre or opens the written version of the playwright's work; yet another position the translator needs to assume. Needless to say, even in the simplest case of a one-character play, where as actor one would have the thoughts, emotions and actions of a single person to follow, translators would still be required to play the roles of the director and of the recipient of the play. Were one to add the roles of the actor, the director and the spectator to the translators' rather innate tendency to act also "*in loco parentis* for the author" (Clark 31), it becomes apparent that unlike a Stanislavskian actor, the translator of the stage has a minimum of no less than four different viewpoints to maintain with every play, a number that, if we follow Stanislavsky's reasoning, would inevitably rise with every new dramatic character added.

The translators' multidimensional function in the theatre is not only evident at but also accountable for several of the points brought forward so far as differences distinguishing them from Stanislavsky's actors. The fact, for example, that the translators' viewpoint assumes different positions in their accounts, switching from that of the actor or character to that of the audience or the playwright and back, is one of the results of the multiple forces exerted on them. Using the actual or an imaginary cast or even the members of their own family to act the play's dialogue either in their mind or in person can be attributed to the translators' need to assign the roles of the characters to someone else so

that they can assume the role of the director monitoring the end result.¹⁴² In a similar manner, one of the reasons translators request to be present during the rehearsals is arguably because it will enable them to distance themselves from all but the role of the spectator.

The second point that is likely to block the translators' attempted fusion with the dramatic characters can arguably be found in the areas the Stanislavskian actors' self-awareness ought to cover. Although this particular subject will be explored in more detail in the chapter to follow dealing with Stanislavsky's understanding of *the art of experiencing* as *artistic expression*, it seems necessary to lay the foundations of this discussion at this point. As Stanislavsky and Vakhtangov's questions clearly indicate, in order to be able to project themselves cognitively and emotionally into the dramatic characters' situation, actors need to be able to answer a variety of questions not only about the dramatic characters but also about themselves: who is their *ideal she* or *he*, what would make them kill their children as Medea does, etc. This is not, however, the only aspect their self-knowledge needs to cover. According to Stanislavsky, each actor is in possession of two unique and unrepeatable apparatuses through which he or she receives, decodes, encodes, and transmits the playwright's creation: an internal and an external one. In order for these apparatuses to perform at their maximum potential, their owner or operator needs to have mastered their mechanics to the utmost possible degree. This means that Stanislavsky's actors need to acquire complete control and knowledge not only over the psychological "process of planting and training within [themselves] the elements necessary to create [a] character" (Stanislavski, *Building a Character* 5) but also over their body which will enable them to present that character to the members of the audience. As

¹⁴² Krishna Winston narrates that when her parents, Richard and Clara Winston, were involved with the translation of Heimito von Doderer's novel *The Demons* "they had the whole family talking in Caxton's English" (qtd. in Wechler 17). "We all developed roles", Winston continues, "we were monks, and I think I was Brother Sebastian and my sister Brother Ambrose. We used to talk for hours talking in this tongue" (ibid. 17).

Stanislavsky points out to his pupils, “without an external form neither your inner characterisation nor the spirit of your image will reach the public. The external characterisation explains and illustrates and thereby conveys to your spectators the inner pattern of your part” (ibid. 5). What needs to be noticed here, however, is that it is not only the human body in general that Stanislavsky wishes his actors to know about but also their own. This means that in addition to having an overall understanding of how, for example, the human muscles work, Stanislavsky’s actors need to know how to make their own muscles work, how to identify when these are working against their will producing unnecessary tension and what they need to do in order to free themselves from such undesired contractions. It is the sum of their knowledge and observation of their own body and of the human body in general that actors will rely on for the physical aspect of their portrayals of the dramatic characters. According to Stanislavsky, such knowledge “requires a well-trained power of attention, capable of quick adjustment and able to distinguish among various physical sensations [which] should be developed to the point where it becomes a subconscious, mechanical habit” (*An Actor Prepares* 99-103).

Returning now to the case of the translator, one could argue that language constitutes for them the equivalent of the actors’ *body*, as it is through it that translators are able to transmit and communicate to the receptors of their work the information acquired from the playwright’s original creation. Granted that this is indeed the case, one could consequently suggest, transposing Stanislavsky’s expectations to their case, that translators would need to observe and familiarise themselves not only with the way language works or is used by others but also with the personal, distinctive, unique way in which they themselves use it. In a similar manner to the actors’ observation of their body’s muscles, translators will need, in other words, to know which words or expressions they use in which situations, what is it that makes them prefer a particular word over another, when and why

do they borrow the language of others etc. Admittedly there are several problematic points Stanislavsky's expected level of linguistic self-awareness raises for translators, not the least of which being the difficulty, if not to say impossibility, of acquiring it. These difficulties, however, will not be discussed at this point as the information contained in the following chapter is necessary in order to acquire a more complete picture of what exactly Stanislavsky expects his actors to know about themselves and why.

Offering a summary of our discussion so far, one could argue that as with the case of reading and studying the play's external circumstances, Stanislavsky's actors and drama translators appear to share not just the same aims, such as entering into the dramatic work's imaginary world and establishing a contact with the characters but also the same tools to achieve them: both use their inner eye and ear, their emotions, their intuition, and their imagination. What may be said to constitute a difference between them is the level of self-consciousness and self-involvement with which they approach the playwright's creation. Compared to Stanislavsky's actors who need to be not only prepared to fully submit their personality to the dramatic characters but also aware what the consequences of that surrender are going to be, translators appear to prefer adopting a more distant or observational position for their approach of the playwright's work. What can be said to explain these two attitudes is that whereas actors are confronted with the prospect of a dual consciousness, translators are required to play a multitude of roles when working for the stage.

Chapter V

The Art of Experiencing As Artistic Expression

The *artistic expression* of the actors' fusion with the dramatic characters constitutes the second pillar of Stanislavsky's aspired *theatre of experiencing*. In a manner similar to the cases of *emotional identification* and *infectiousness*, what Stanislavsky understands under the notion of *artistic expression* emerges as a distinct concept out of the observations and comments he makes watching his pupils rehearse various scenes in his imaginary classroom. One of these comments, which is of particular importance to the way in which actors ought to express and present their work to their audience, reads:

"Truth on the stage is not the small external truth which leads to naturalism It is what you can sincerely *believe in* The secret of art is that it converts a fiction into a beautiful artistic form Nature and truth are ... indivisible. ... There is no greater beauty in the world than nature itself" ("An Actor's Handbook" 23).¹⁴³

Observing Stanislavsky's remark, one recognises an interesting set of multiple equations being formed, according to which art equals beauty equals nature equals truth. Were one to use the transitive property of these equalities, one could suggest that for Stanislavsky art equals truth, which would consequently mean that his *artistic expression* is in fact to be understood as *truthful expression*. Such an interpretation would also be in agreement with Tolstoy's expectation of all artists to feel genuinely whatever it is they wish to communicate to the recipients of their work. "Sincerity", argues Tolstoy in his definition of art, "is the most important ... condition ... which distinguishes art from artistic counterfeits and at the same time determines the worth of any art regardless of its content" (122). "Everything that happens on stage must be convincing to the actor himself, to his associates and to the spectators", explains Stanislavsky to his student-actors building on Tolstoy's suggestion, "[i]t must inspire belief in the truthfulness of the emotion felt, and in

¹⁴³ The emphasis added is to be found in the original.

the action carried out by the actor” (*An Actor Prepares* 129-130). Since it is only truth that can inspire such belief, for “truth cannot be separated from belief, nor belief from truth”, as he points out (*ibid.* 129), it consequently follows that only “a role which is built on truth will grow, whereas one built on stereotype will shrivel” (*ibid.* 29). This means that in addition to having to learn how to act and feel in accordance with the characters, which is arguably what the process of *emotional identification* aims at teaching them, Stanislavsky’s actors will also need to identify and banish the lies and falsehood of theatrical clichés from their portrayals. The latter constitutes the dominant theme of the *artistic expression*. For Stanislavsky such cleansing process has to begin before the actors take their first step in the theatre.

“Now remember firmly what I am going to tell you: the theatre, on account of its publicity and spectacular side, attracts many people who merely want to capitalise their beauty or make careers. They take advantage of the ignorance of the public, its perverted taste, favourism, intrigues, false success, and many other means which have no relation to creative art. These exploiters are the deadliest enemies of art. ... Therefore ... you must make up your mind, once and for all, did you come here to serve art, and to make sacrifices for its sake, or to exploit your own personal ends?” (*An Actor Prepares* 31).

Setting aside his critique of the audience and his assessment of the relationship it enjoys with the performers, which will be explored in more detail in the chapter to follow, what becomes clear from the above quotation is that for Stanislavsky serving the art of theatre is incompatible with two things: self-promotion and the dry pursuit of professional advancement. These two elements are “the bad, the dangerous, corrupting bacilli of the theatre,” he argues, “breed[ing] in an actor the sense of craving for constant, uninterrupted titillation of his personal vanity” (*Building a Character* 251). Yielding to either attitude would be harmful for the actors not only in terms of their conduct outside the theatre, “under [the] emblem and hall-mark [of which they] represent [it] daily to thousands of

spectators” (ibid. 254), but also as far as their behaviour on stage is concerned as they would be led astray from the creation of truthful characters. An ardent opponent of inauthentic and artificial acting, Stanislavsky proceeds to discuss what happens when actors do not restrain themselves from self-display and careerism. Having watched the exhibition performance of his imaginary pupils given in order for him to “judge [their] dramatic quality” (*An Actor Prepares* 1), Stanislavsky remarks to one of his fictional pupils:

“You showed us your little hands, your little feet, your whole person, because it could be seen better on the stage ... you flirted with the audience and did not play Katherine. You see Shakespeare did not write the *Taming of the Shrew* in order that a student by the name of Sonya Veliaminova could show the audience her little foot from the stage or could flirt with her admirers. Shakespeare had a different end in view, one which remained foreign to you, and therefore unknown to us” (ibid. 30-31).

Veliaminova’s portrayal of the Bard’s female protagonist was indicative of “a conscious principle that is far from easy to change or to root out of the artist [namely] the exploitation of art,” Stanislavsky concludes to the young actress’s disappointment (ibid. 30). According to his understanding, actors who abuse the precious gift of stage charm “are dubbed ‘prostitutes’ [behind the scenes] because they exhibit their charms, trade on them for their own gain rather than make use of this power to fascinate, to enhance the character they have created” (*Building a Character* 246). By indulging this type of self-promotion, actors not only miss themselves but also deny their audience the opportunity to “commune with the great geniuses such as Shakespeare, Pushkin, Gogol, Molière” (ibid. 250).

In a similar manner actors betray their art and deceive the spectators when instead of seeking to “hand over [their] soul to [the character]” they “carry on to the stage something which is neither important nor essential for their parts” (Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares* 22-23). Commenting on the portrayal of Othello by another of his student-actors, Stanislavsky notices that he “reached for an external characterization which seemed to

[him] effective, vivid and easy to reproduce”, in other words he “approached [his] role from the point of view of impressing the spectators” (ibid. 28). Since the young actor, merely a beginner, did not know how to establish contact with the character through “true organic feelings, that corresponded to those of the person [he was] portraying” (ibid, 28), the Stanislavsky continues, the way he reacted was completely understandable and excusable.

“What was there left for you to do? To grab the first trait that happened to flash into your mind. Your mind is stored full of such things, ready for any occasion in life. ... In such hurried or general descriptions we care very little whether what we transmit corresponds to reality. We are satisfied with any general characteristic or illusion” (ibid, 28).

The construction of such an illusion, Stanislavsky reminds his pupils, is the work of craftsmen-actors who “have definite techniques for reading all the roles, ready-made clichés for illustrating all human emotions, and established patterns for aping all human characters” (“On Various Trends” 134). These techniques, which “have become traditional and are passed down from generation to generation”, can be “easily acquired through constant exercise, so that they become second nature” enabling actors to advance in a more effortless manner in their careers by being entrusted with bigger roles and winning the audience’s admiration (Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares* 24-25).¹⁴⁴ An artist of the *theatre of experiencing*, however, “must protect himself most conscientiously against such devices” (ibid. 26) by uprooting what Stanislavsky considers being the two most dangerous and harmful facets of such “forced acting” (ibid. 17): *mechanical acting* and *over-acting*. Elaborating on what distinguishes the one from the other, Stanislavsky explains that “whereas mechanical acting makes use of worked-out stencils to replace real feelings, over-

¹⁴⁴ All that an actor-craftsman needs, writes Stanislavsky, “is a stagecraft experience, the habit of acting, a pleasant manner, a technique, a part to bring out the best of his looks and his natural winning qualities, and his success for many years to come is assured” (“On Various Trends” 102-103).

acting takes the first general human conventions that come along and uses them without even sharpening or preparing them for the stage” (ibid. 29).

To these “rubber stamps” (ibid. 28), Stanislavsky continues, one must also add “the actors’ personal habits ... formed naturally or acquired on the stage” (“On Various Trends” 147). These habits concern not only the “reflectory motions and gestures ... made unconsciously” (ibid. 147) or “the stilted gait used by many actors” on the stage (Stanislavski, *Building a Character* 50) but also the “mechanical speech ... the thoughtless parrot-like pronunciation of lines learned by heart without any regard for their inner essence” (ibid. 111). Discussing in particular the latter Stanislavsky points out to his pupils:

“[B]efore you begin your regular speech work it is absolutely necessary to be made aware of the deficiencies in your speech so that you can break yourselves permanently of the habit, widespread among actors, of giving their own incorrect speech as an excuse for their slovenly ways of speaking on the stage” (ibid. 110).¹⁴⁵

For Stanislavsky correcting one’s speech involves not only dealing with issues of pronunciation, which he considers “as difficult an art as singing [requiring] training and a technique bordering on virtuosity” (ibid. 83), but also acquiring an understanding of “the nature of punctuation signs” (ibid. 131) and mastering the use of pauses which he classifies into three categories: the *logical* pause, which “mechanically shapes the measures of a text and thereby contributes to their intelligibility”; the *psychological* pause, which “adds life to the thoughts, phrases and measures” (ibid. 138); and finally, the *Luftpause* or “pause for air

¹⁴⁵ Addressing an audience of professional American actors wishing to learn about the Stanislavsky System, Robert Lewis illustrated in one of his lectures given between April and June 1957 how actors can result to speaking in a *slovenly* manner: “For example: you may have to say to somebody in a play, ‘I knew you did it!’ ... if you come out on the stage and say ... ‘I nooya...ya...ya...ya...didut!’ ... you may get over the idea that where the author had written one ‘you,’ you said four and you may even make some people feel that, having changed the word ‘you’ to ‘ya,’ you are more sexy but ... must every ‘yes’ be a ‘yeah’ – even if it is not a ‘yeah’-type character? Is this not done solely for comfort?” (*Method or Madness* 31-89).

or breath [which] is the briefest of the rest, [taking] the slightest lag of a second in the tempo of singing or speech and [leaving] the line of sound intact” (ibid. 140).

According to Stanislavsky, “each person who goes on to the stage has to re-train himself from the beginning” and learn anew how to listen, “see, walk, move about, hold intercourse with people and, finally, speak” (ibid. 110). The reasons why Stanislavsky stressed so much the importance of striving for such a state of faultlessness, however, were not only of a philosophical but also of a practical nature. By learning how to perform correctly everyday actions, such as walking and speaking, the actors will increase their ability to cope with tasks that entail prolonged physical effort, be it a lengthy monologue or a large-scale production such as the 1980 stage adaptation of Charles Dickens’s *The Life And Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby* by the Royal Shakespeare Company, which ran for eight and a half hours. Furthermore, by freeing themselves from their defects, the actors of the *theatre of experiencing* are also protecting the dramatic characters from being infected with them: an actress who has learned how to assume and maintain a correct posture will not portray, for example, Juliet with “the legs from the hips to the knees ... turned inward [,] [her] heels ... turned out and [her] toes in”, which is how, according to Stanislavsky, “most women” usually stand (ibid. 42). When “it is [their] intention to show a character with a physical defect”, on the other hand, such as Shakespeare’s Richard III for example, the lack of personal weaknesses will enable the actors not only to determine unobstructed the precise form of the character’s defect but also “to display it in just the proper degree,” Stanislavsky concludes (ibid. 38).

Stanislavsky’s *artistic expression* appears to resemble a coin with two separate yet fundamentally joined sides. The first concerns the actors’ personal or professional habits and the aspects of their performance these are likely to influence. The main themes of this rather practical side are the existence of different kinds of pauses, the importance of

punctuation and the distinction between mechanical acting and over-acting. The second side of *artistic expression*, which is arguably a more theoretical or philosophical one, involves the reasons Stanislavsky wants his pupils to eliminate these defects from their acting and his notion of the exploitation of art. Commencing the exploration of the System's second pillar within the framework of translation by concentrating on the former side, one could argue that each of its main themes occupies a different and rather peculiar position in the translator's creative process.

Seen from the perspective of conversation analysis, pauses and silences in an ordinary conversation and consequently in terms of a dramatic dialogue offer themselves to a rich variety of interpretations. As Vimala Herman points out in her article "Turn Management in Drama", a break in one's speech

"... can signify hesitation, or be used as a ploy for emphasis. Pause-ridden speech can also be used to dramatise the trials bringing thought and language into alignment. Gaps can stretch from initial non-responsiveness followed by a response to full-scale silence. In the former case, when initial silence occurs between [speaking] turns, gaps may constitute switching pauses when it is unclear as to whether the silence should be attributed to the first or second speaker or to both. An initial stretch of silence in response to another's speech can also be interpreted as caution, the speaker following the 'think before you speak' maxim. ... Silences are generally interpreted in relative terms; relative, that is, to the various cultural or interpersonal values associated with the performance of speech in context. For instance, interactants who privilege a fast tempo and verbosity in speech could find slower, deliberate disfluent or laconic speakers a trial – and vice versa" (20-21).¹⁴⁶

Considering the range of meanings pauses and silences can acquire it becomes clear that they constitute an extremely powerful communicative device in the hands of someone who can construct, or for that matter reconstruct, a dialogue such as a playwright or a translator. It is in recognition of such power that Lars Hamberg warns translators to be exceptionally cautious when dealing with the pauses and silences in a dramatic work and to

¹⁴⁶ More information on the subject of dramatic pauses seen from the perspective of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis can also be found in the second chapter of Vimala Herman's book *Dramatic Discourse: Dialogue As Interaction in Plays* (pp.76-121).

“observe them – even when they are not indicated – since two lines both before and after ... pauses must be given a quite particular imprint, rhythm and emphasis” (92). What makes Hamberg’s caution particularly interesting, however, is the distinction it brings forward between visible and invisible pauses. Considering that for Stanislavsky logical pauses and breathing pauses are either directly or indirectly related to punctuation signs, whereas psychological pauses “will boldly step in at places where a logical or grammatical pause seems impossible” (*Building a Character* 139), one could suggest that Hamberg’s notion of explicit and implicit pauses appears to be a perfect fit for Stanislavsky’s model.

Setting aside for the moment their relation to a text’s punctuation, it seems that the most common visible or, in Stanislavsky’s terminology, logical pauses in a playwright’s work are those indicated by the creator him- or herself. Although such a feature is missing from classical plays, which did not include any kind of stage directions, modern playwrights usually mention in their works the points in a dialogue or monologue where a silence is to take place by placing in brackets or in a parenthesis the term *pause* written in italics. The transfer of these pauses into the translated text, however, is not always carried out according to the pattern laid out by the playwright in the original work. Whereas, for example, Michael Frayn chose to maintain all the pauses in his translation of Chekhov’s play *The Three Sisters* as they were to be found in the original Russian text, Brian Friel chose to eliminate nearly all of them in his version of the play. Furthermore, it is not unusual for a translator to take liberties not only with the placement of the pauses but also with the terms used to describe them. To illustrate this, we shall consider the case of the renowned British playwright, Patrick Marber. What makes Marber’s case stand out is that he uses a classification similar, if not to say identical, to Stanislavsky tripartite classification for describing the intervals of silence between his characters’ lines. The fact that the *pauses*, *silences* and *beats* that Marber uses in his plays appear to correspond

respectively to Stanislavsky's logical, psychological and breathing pauses presents one with the unique opportunity to observe how translators react when being directly confronted with something akin to Stanislavsky's systematisation of dramatic pauses.

Interestingly enough, although some of Marber's translators chose to maintain his distinction, others did not. Thomas Moschopoulos, for example, the Greek translator of Marber's play *Closer*, translated literally pause as *παύση* [páfsi], silence as *σιωπή* [siopí] and beat as *χρόνος* [xrónos]. Bernd Samland, on the other hand, the German translator of Marber's *Dealer's Choice* was not so consistent with his choices. Placing the following extract from Act III sc. 2 of *Dealer's Choice* next to its German translation, published as part of Michael Raab's article "Macht-Spiele" in the magazine *Die Deutsche Bühne*, may serve as an example of how Samland dealt with Marber's *pauses* and *beats*.¹⁴⁷

1. Sweeney : Can we play cards please?	Sweeney : Können wir bitte Karten spielen?
2. Mugsy : We can, dunno about you.	Depsy : Wir können das, von dir weiß ich das nicht.
3. <i>Deals an up card to Sweeney.</i>	<i>(Depsy gibt Sweeney eine offene Karte.)</i>
4. Eight of clubs, still possible...	Karo Acht, immer noch möglich...
5. <i>And then Frankie.</i>	<i>(Dann gibt er Frankie eine Karte.)</i>
6. King of hearts... bad luck, mate.	Herz König, Pech für dich, Alter.
7. Frankie : What d'you mean?	Frankie : Was soll das heißen?
8. Mugsy : Suicide king you lose automatically.	Depsy : Schmerzkönig, verlierst du automatisch.
9. Frankie : You what?	Frankie : Was ist das?
10. Mugsy : Bye bye.	Depsy : Adios.
11. Frankie : You never said.	Frankie : Du hast nie gesagt –
12. All : Yes he did.	Alle : Doch das hat er.

¹⁴⁷ At the time of this writing I was unfortunately unable to obtain a copy of Samland's full text or of Helmar Harald Fischer's *Hautnah*, i.e. the German translation of *Closer*, where Marber uses all three of his pauses.

13. *Beat.*

14. **Frankie:** What a stupid proxy little game.

15. **Stephen:** You were warned.

16. **Frankie:** WHAT A FEEBLE FUCKING FARCE.

17. **Sweeney:** Could you please SHUT UP.

18. **Mugsy:** Shh, shh, everyone quiet for Sween, he's doing his bollocks, quiet.

19. **Sweeney:** Deal, Mugs.

20. **Mugsy** (*deals a final up card to himself*): Four of hearts. Check.

21. *Pause.*

22. **Sweeney** (*to Frankie*): You got that fifty?

23. *Pause.*

24. Frank... the fifty.

25. **Frankie** *gives Sweeney fifty pounds in cash.*

26. **Sweeney:** Let's see what you're made of, Mugsy. There's fifty plus forty... seven...that's ninety seven all in.

27. **Mugsy:** Call.

28. **Sweeny:** What you got, Mugs?

29. **Mugsy:** Five tens.

30. *Pause.*

31. **Sweeny:** How the fuck can you have 'five tens', there's only four in the pack and I've got one of them.

Frankie: Was für ein versifftes blödes Spiel.

Stephen: Du warst gewarnt.

Frankie: Was für eine schwache abgefackte Farce.

Sweeney: Würdest du bitte die SCHNAUZE HALTEN.

Depsy: Pst, pst, alles ganz ruhig, denn Sween, der reibt sich die Grieben. Ruhe.

Sweeney: Geben, Deps.

Depsy (*gibt sich eine letzte offene Karte*): Herz Vier. Weiter.(*Er klopft auf den Tisch.*)

Sweeney (*zu Frankie*): Hast du den Fuffi?

(*Pause*)

Frank, gib mir den Fünfziger.

(*Frank gibt Sweeney £50 in bar.*)

Sweeney: Jetzt wolln wir doch mal sehn, was in dir steckt, Depsy. Hier sind fünfzig und ein und zwei und... siebenundvierzig... macht alles in einem siebenundneunzig.

Despy: Gehe mit.

Sweeney: Was hast du Deps?

Despy: Fünfmal die Zehn.

(*Pause*)

Sweeney: Wie zum Teufel kannst du fünf haben, wenn nur vier in einem Spiel sind und ich eine davon habe.

32. Mugsy: I've got queen four in the box, my son, four wilds.	Despy: Ich hab vier Damen auf der hand, mein Sohn, vier wilde Karten.
33. Mugsy <i>turns over his cards</i> .	
34. <i>Beat</i> .	(<i>Pause</i>)
35. Sweeny: You win.	Sweeney: Du gewinnst.

There are two interesting things one needs to notice about the way Samland handled Marber's pauses. The first one is that although he chose to skip altogether the first *beat* in line 13, he opted for rendering the second one in line 34 as *pause*. The second one concerns lines 20 and 21. Marber's Mugsy *checks* without knocking on the table and then there is a *pause* before the next character speaks. In Samland's case, on the other hand, that pause is missing or rather is merged with an action as Mugsy *knocks on the table* and Sweeney's line follows immediately after that. Considering, however, that Marber specifically mentions when the characters knock on the table instead of saying the word *check*, one could suggest that there was no apparent reason for Samland not to follow the playwright's lead in the case of Mugsy. In a similar manner one finds it hard to understand why the German translator avoided not only rendering the first *beat* but also using a different term for Marber's *pause* and *beat* such as their equivalent musical terms *Pause* and *Takt*.¹⁴⁸

Despite deviating from the original, Samland's choices do not seem at first glance to have a particular effect on the scene. Although he does offer only one *pause* instead of two *beats* and a *pause*, the scene's overall rhythm appears to remain intact and there is no evident loss of information about the characters. Considering, however, the distinct significance the length of one's silences as well as the physical traits that accompany them acquire particularly within the framework of a poker game, one could argue that Samland's

¹⁴⁸ In a similar manner it is equally hard to justify Samland's choice to follow Marber's pattern and use capital letters when rendering Sweeney's line (17) yet not when translating Frankie's line (16).

inconsistent translation strategy is not of little consequence after all. Calculating odds or cards, counting one's chips, contemplating a bluff or a double-bluff, measuring one's opponent, etc. are all actions characterised by certain external signs, both temporal and physical, which the players communicate either intentionally or unintentionally during the game. Indeed a great deal of winning in poker depends on the players' ability to recognise and decode their opponents' signs and conceal their own. By changing the signs' manifestation and duration, i.e. by having Mugsy *knocking on the table* when he does not, by deleting a *beat* and a *pause* and by rendering a *beat* as a *pause*, Samland rewrites in effect the silent semiotic code by which the players' intentions are transmitted. This consequently means that he distorts or conceals from the play's recipients valuable information about the characters' inner state. The full *pause* it takes for Samland's Sweeney to admit his loss to Mugsy in lines 32-35, for example, could be interpreted as a sign of his distrust of the legitimacy and superiority of Mugsy's hand. In Marber's original, however, Sweeney admits his loss without any hesitation in a *beat*. In a similar manner, Samland's Frankie appears to be all too ready to express his disapproval of Mugsy's rules in lines 12-14 as he speaks without a pause, nearly on top of the other players' expressed support to Mugsy. Marber's Frankie, on the other hand, reacts in the same manner yet a *beat* after the other players have confirmed that Mugsy's rules were clear from the beginning.

In order to illustrate how influential particularly a missing pause can be, let us consider the opposite case of adding one where none exists. An example of such a case can be found at the end of David Johnston's article "Securing the Performability of the Play in Translation" where he discusses the first lines of Lorca's play *Yerma*:

"At the beginning of the play, the eponymous protagonist is gently chiding her husband for her childless state after two years.

YERMA: Veinticuatro meses llevamos casados.

The emphatic positioning of the twenty-four months at the beginning of the complaint leads one translation to attempt to underline the time-span through the following rhetoric device.

YERMA: Four and twenty months we've been married.

The difficulty here is that the whimsical nature of the inversion distracts from the character's central strategy, which is to communicate to her husband the pain of each month's disappointing realisation that she still has not conceived. A simpler, but more effective translation could read:

YERMA: Twenty-four months. (*Pause.*) That's how long we've been married."
(36).

Despite the fact that Johnston is admittedly right in arguing that his latter rendering of Yerma's utterance reads more easily and is more powerful than the former one produced by Jacqueline Minette and Ian Macpherson, it is not only the change from *for and twenty* to *twenty-four* that brings about such effect but also the two additional "suprasegmental features" that Johnston introduces in his translation (Nord 118).¹⁴⁹ The first one is a pause in the middle of Yerma's line. Johnston's pause, which, following Hamberg's reasoning, could be described as an invisible one, brings forward two particularly interesting issues. The first one is that it appears to have the same effect on Lorca's original as Samland's deletion of the first *beat* has on Marber's text yet in a converse manner: on the one hand it alters its rhythm yet not by shortening the time interval between the utterances but by extending the duration of the line itself, while on the other it influences one's understanding of the characters by revealing instead of concealing information about their inner state.

¹⁴⁹ I chose to describe Johnston's added pause and full-stop as *suprasegmental features* instead of *non-verbal elements* following Christiane Nord and Penelope Sparrow's classification of "the paralinguistic elements of face-to-face communication (e.g. facial expressions, gestures, voice quality, etc.) as well as the non-linguistic elements belonging to a written text (photos, illustrations, logos, special types of print, etc.)" as belonging to the latter category and the "intonational features, pauses etc. and the graphical devices that perform analogous functions in written communication (punctuation, capitalization, italicization, etc.)" to the former (118).

The second interesting thing about Johnston's pause is that despite being clearly "an illegal break" with regard to the playwright's original formulation (Stanislavski, *Building a Character* 139), it does not seem to be a translator's pause. Johnston is arguably not right when stating that his version is *simpler*. The *simple* thing for a translator confronted with the particular line would be not only to avoid the inversion of the number of months, which is indeed *distracting* as Johnston rightfully points out, but also to keep the rest of the sentence as is. This would mean that Yerma's line ought to have read, '*Twenty-four months we've been married*'. Johnston, however, appears to not be following the evident, external rhythm of the original line but rather the hidden, internal one that runs within the character herself. The pause he assigns to Yerma appears to be a stop made out "of necessity brimming with activity and rich inner content"; it appears to be not a pause as much as "an eloquent silence", to use Stanislavsky's own words (ibid. 138-139). In other words, Johnston appears to be approaching the text not only as a translator who is interested in the speakability of the line but also as an actor who is interested in the character's inner state; the pause Johnston adds is the Stanislavskian psychological pause of an actress cast in the particular role. Johnston is evidently not the only translator who decides to put into written form such invisible pauses. A similar case can arguably be found in George Digby, who also "mark[ed] pauses in [the] stage directions" of Calderón's play *Elvira; or the Worst Not Always True* suggesting, for example, that in Act I the character "Fernando continue his speech 'after pausing a while'" (Riera 126).

Acting as translators, however, neither Digby nor Johnston can break the rules of written speech. A sentence that reads '*Twenty-four months (pause) we've been married*' would have probably struck any given reader as incomprehensible. This is arguably the reason that forces Johnston to place a period in the middle of the character's utterance breaking it in half and bringing unavoidably into our discussion the second theme on

Stanislavsky's practical side of *artistic expression*, namely the role of punctuation. According to the Stanislavsky, punctuation signs are closely related to the logical and breathing pauses in a characters' speech. Both punctuation and the particular types of pauses define not only phrasing, as they "unite words into groups (or speech measures) and ... divide the groups from one another" (Stanislavski, *Building a Character* 127), but also meaning. To illustrate this Stanislavsky asks his pupils to consider the words *Pardon impossible send to Siberia*. Depending on where one would stop for a logical or a breathing pause, or for that matter place a period, a comma or a hyphen, Stanislavsky continues, the meaning of the phrase constructed may turn from mercy to exile as "either you say 'Pardon – impossible send to Siberia,' or 'Pardon impossible – send to Siberia!'" (ibid. 127).¹⁵⁰ Punctuation signs, however, enjoy an additional two characteristics compared to logical pauses. The first one is that they call for a particular intonation. "Take away from the period its final round out drop of the voice," Stanislavsky points out to his pupils, "and the listener will not realise that the sentence is ended and that nothing more will follow. Take from the question mark its typical phonetic twist, and the listener will not know that a question has been put to him, and to which he is expected to answer" (ibid. 130). The second characteristic of punctuation is that it aims at eliciting a particular response from the listener. "The phonetic symbol of a question", argues Stanislavsky, "calls for an answer; the exclamation sign for sympathy, approval, or protest; a colon demands attentive consideration for what follows, and so on" (ibid. 130).

Despite the overwhelming power that punctuation marks, just like dramatic pauses, arguably enjoy, translators do not appear to have a more consistent strategy for their

¹⁵⁰ Evidently the particular example Stanislavsky uses appears to be a quite common one in the Russian culture for demonstrating the power of punctuation. Whilst exiled in the Gulag labor camp in Kolyma, the Russian author Yevgenia Ginzburg taught NKVD officers about grammar and syntax. At one instance she gave her students "the example of a message from Tsar Nicholas II. Responding to an appeal from a prisoner sentenced to death, the Tsar telegraphed: 'Execution, impossible retrieve.' She showed how she could reverse the meaning by moving the comma one word to the right. 'Now you see', she told the class, 'that man's life may depend on a single misplaced or omitted comma'" (Hochschild 285).

transfer into the target language text. According to Gay McAuley, the translators, editors and publishers of Shakespeare's plays, for example, have taken several liberties with the texts' punctuation "in the absence of uncorrupted manuscripts or even universally accepted rules or consistent practice in relation with punctuation in 16th century English" (113). Discussing in particular François-Victor Hugo and Jean-Michel Déprats' translation of Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* into French, McAuley points out that Portia's monologue in Act IV sc. 1, also known as the 'quality of mercy' speech, "is divided into nine sentences in Hugo's prose translation, as opposed to only three in Déprats' verse translation" (ibid. 113). Similar differences in punctuation are also to be found in works with a less problematic publication, editorial and punctuational past, such as the passage from Marber's *Dealer's Choice* quoted above, where the ellipses in lines 6 and 24 were replaced in both cases with a comma whereas the period in line 11 was replaced with a hyphen, and, of course, in Johnston's suggested rendering of Yerma's line. According to Michael Meyer, however, such practice is completely justifiable. As he points out in his article "On Translating Plays", it is the translators' prerogative to induce such changes in punctuation.

"It is, I think, accepted that a translator may legitimately break up a long sentence into two, or join two into one; but what is one to do with, for example, Strindberg's repeated use of exclamation marks and three dots? My own feeling is that a translator must have a free hand to excise both. Exclamation marks used as often as Strindberg uses them give a terribly melodramatic effect; and three dots tend to bring out the worst in any actor – the 'meaningful pause'. Actors nowadays, and readers too, are used to looking for the hidden implication of a phrase; better that a few should miss such an implication rather than saddle the dialogue with something that is as destructive in its way as repeated italics" (49).

Setting aside whether or not it is the translators' *legitimate* right to change the original creator's punctuation and whether omitting an ellipsis, or for that matter all of a text's punctuation, would be enough to prevent actors from pausing *meaningfully* and

readers from searching for secret meanings, what is interesting to notice in Meyer's comment is his acknowledgement, however indirect this may be, of the power punctuation marks have over the recipient of the text. The same conclusion can arguably be drawn from the comments of translators who put forward a different justification for the way they handled the original text's punctuation. According to Eugene Bristow, for example, the reason Ronald Hingley decided to omit the repeated ellipses from his translations of Chekhov's plays was that "there are occasions when the page of a translated text appears to be suffering from measles" (qtd. in May 132). Answering to Hingley, Bristow, who opted for maintaining as much as possible Chekhov's marks, points out that where Hingley sees *measles*, he saw "impressionism, almost pointillism" (ibid. 132). It is in recognition of the "subtle ways" punctuation can define "the articulation of a thought process, speed of delivery, phrasing and even breathing" (McAuley 113), that some translators instead of taking matters into their own hands and *excising* a play's punctuation, as Meyer appears to be suggesting they do, choose to delegate that responsibility to the actors themselves by not including any punctuation signs at all in their translations. The screenwriter, actor and translator Jean-Claude Carrière is one of those translators. According to McAuley, Carrière

"... does not provide punctuation in the Shakespeare translation he gives to the actors in Peter Brook's company. They are free to punctuate their own lines in terms of the meaning and rhythms that evolve during the rehearsal process and, as Carrière states, 'This enhances their work process, because a comma or an exclamation mark can suggest, even in a quasi subliminal way, how to perform the line'" (ibid. 113).¹⁵¹

Carrière's decision to give the company's actors the opportunity to punctuate the translated text in accordance with their needs appears to coincide with an exercise Stanislavsky asks one of his imaginary pupils to carry out. Stanislavsky requests that the

¹⁵¹ Carrière's quotation, which reads in the original French "cela favorise leur travail car une virgule ou un point d'exclamation indigent, d'une façon quasi inconsciente, un jeu", is translated by McAuley herself in the endnotes of her article (122).

young actor recite an eight lines long passage from Shakespeare's *Othello* that contains no period. Observing that he was "out of breath and flushed from tension" (*Building a Character* 129) by the time he finishes reading it, Stanislavsky asks him to divide up the speech into measures using not punctuation signs but logical pauses. This is how Nazvanov, i.e. Stanislavsky's alter ego among the students, chose to place his pauses:

Like to the Pontic sea	Like to the Pontic sea*
Whose icy current and compulsive	Whose icy current and compulsive
course	course*
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on	Ne'er feels retiring ebb* but keeps due
To the Propontic and the Hellespont;	on
Even so my bloody thoughts, with	To the Propontic and the Hellespont*
violent pace	Even so my bloody thoughts with violent
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to	pace*
humble love,	Shall ne'er look back ne'er ebb to
Swallow them up.	humble love*
	Swallow them up.

What is interesting to notice by comparing the two texts is that although not all of Nazvanov's pauses correspond directly to the original punctuation signs, they appear to divide up the current passage in a more rhythmic manner: on the left side there are four consecutive long segments followed by two short ones, whereas on the right there is short-long-short and a long-long-short pattern emerging. Although the pupil can now read the passage more easily, this is not where the exercise comes to an end. Stanislavsky asks the young fictional actor to recite it once again adding this time also the intonation called forth by the punctuation signs of the original text. The student becomes initially confused until eventually he succeeds in controlling the combination of pauses, punctuation and intonation. Needless to say, when at a latter stage Nazvanov is asked by Stanislavsky to fill the text with the character's psychological pauses as well, the young actor becomes once more overwhelmed by his initial confusion.

Stanislavsky's exercise appears to serve two distinct purposes. The first one is to highlight the inextricable link that connects and the complexity that surrounds dramatic pauses and punctuation: they are to be thought of as harmoniously interconnected yet able to function in a contradictory and independent manner; they are visible but can also be hidden; they refer to the external structure of the playwright's text yet concern also the inner state of the character; they simultaneously define measure, intonation, silence and subtext. The second aim of Stanislavsky's exercise is to underline that the power of this admittedly overwhelming multi-functionality of pauses and punctuation is not fully revealed outside the stage: it is not until the young actor attempts to actually say the line that he comes to realise how difficult it is to balance meaning, emotion and expression. Considering both suggestions from the perspective of drama translation, one could accordingly argue that regardless of how aware a translator might be of the implications pauses and punctuation carry within the terms of a written work, he or she will also need to be exposed to the reality of their articulation on the stage in order to be fully sensitised to the particular functions they acquire for an actor. Johnston appears to put forward a similar suggestion when arguing that

"Many translators read their work out loud as they go along; this may work in terms of securing speakability, but it is still insufficient. Only a fully-fledged performance environment, with its emphasis on verbal interaction, will bring the translator into direct encounter with the nature of stage language ... – an encounter which may remain otherwise subsumed beneath the myriad of decisions to be taken at the level of individual words and speeches" ("Securing the Performability" 36).

Admittedly not all translators have the opportunity to work closely with the director and the actors, let alone enjoy a long-lasting relationship similar to that mentioned earlier between Carrière and the actors of Peter Brook's company. It seems, however, that without acquiring an insight into the way actors handle pauses and punctuation on the stage,

translators risk being led to adopt a unilateral rendering strategy that would involve the translation of these features only from a textual perspective, which could in turn confuse or mislead the actors during their subsequent exposure to them.

Although it is without that translators need to look in order to appreciate a Stanislavskian actor's understanding of pauses and punctuation, it is within that they have to turn their attention to in order to observe how or whether Stanislavsky's next theme on the practical aspect of *artistic expression* might influence their creative process: the notions of mechanical acting and over-acting. For Stanislavsky there is a very thin yet distinct dividing line between the two concepts.

Mechanical acting involves the use of traditional theatrical behavioural and verbal effects for the portrayal of a character. In his study "On Various Trends In Theatrical Art", Stanislavsky lists a series of such actions arguing, for example, that as far as craftsmen are concerned, "theatrical medicine recognises only consumption, fever, and anemia", death on stage can only occur due to "heart failure or asphyxiation" (143), love is to be "always conveyed in a mellifluent voice; passion rolls the consonants and bites off the words [and] heroism adores lilting fioriture and overuses shouting" (ibid. 138).

Over-acting, on the other hand, refers to the employment of common, conventional effects for the depiction of the character. As Stanislavsky points out to his pupils, were he to have asked any of them, for example, to "play ... immediately, without any preparation, a savage in general", the majority of their portrayals would almost certainly have included conventional reactions such as "tearing around, roaring, showing [one's] teeth, rolling the whites of [one's] eyes" (*An Actor Prepares* 28-29). According to Stanislavsky, it is extremely difficult to trace the origins such over-acting effects. Some may have stemmed from a theatrical tradition, which means that they can also be considered as the products of mechanical acting; others may have been found accidentally during the course of

rehearsing or performing a play and then due to their favourable reception become standardised by the actor him- or herself. Or they may be simply the result of an actor's copy of "some other actor's manner of moving, walking and speaking" (Stanislavski, "On Various Trends" 146). The fact that these stereotypes can be generated and established by the actors themselves leads Stanislavsky to caution his student-actors that more often than not "amateurish over-acting grows into the worst kind of mechanical acting" (*An Actor Prepares* 29).

Regardless of their origins, however, what is of crucial importance to Stanislavsky is that both mechanical acting and over-acting have the same negative influence on the actors: they both project into their mind a pre-established, general form of the character that blocks their creative vision and hinders them from exploring and consequently portraying the particular one contained in the playwright's work. Turning our attention now to the case of translators, one could argue that this enticing force of preconceived ideas is also likely to inhibit their creative process as well. According to Paul Kussmaul, the mistakes the student-translators who participated in his experiment made were not to be attributed to their carelessness in closely reading the ST but rather to the influence prior knowledge exerted on their understanding of the segments they were asked to render from English into German.

"Firstly, it can happen that the meaning of a word stored in a student's memory is so dominant that it blots out the context completely. Secondly, it can also happen that the context is experienced in such a personal and dominating way, that it completely overshadows the meaning of a word that ought to have been activated. ... In the first case it is the meaning already present in the student's memory, in the second case it is the expectation created by the preceding context, which makes it impossible for the student to recognise the meaning of the words in front of him or her ..." (*Training the Translator* 34).

According to Kussmaul, in both these instances one could diagnose a “misuse of top-down knowledge” (ibid, 35). In other words, the students misjudged the appropriateness of their general understanding of a segment for the translation of the particular one contained in the text. It is arguably the same weakness in choosing the appropriate means of expression that Stanislavsky wants to protect his actors from. Just as Kussmaul does not consider his students’ mistranslations as a sign of “serious deficiency in foreign language competence” that needs to be penalised (ibid. 127), Stanislavsky does not think of the choices actor-craftsmen make as useless or wrong but rather as misemployed. The problem with “clapping, jumping, humming waltzes, whirling and laughing in peals”, for example, which, according to Stanislavsky, is how craftsmen portray joy on the stage (“On Various Trends” 143), is not that it constitutes an invalid or unlikely string of actions to accompany one’s happiness but rather that it is not the only way available to actors for expressing a character’s delight. The mistake that actor-craftsmen make is that they opt repeatedly and solely for the particular way of expressing joy and consequently not only misrepresent the cases where the character’s inner state calls for a less enthusiastic display of his or her emotions but also eventually render their portrayals “mechanically disciplined and thus deprived of vitality” (ibid. 144). Although one cannot know whether Kussmaul’s students would have made the exact same translational decisions were they to have been exposed to the same words in a different context, it seems that the negative side effects of an actor’s mechanical acting and over-acting are to be diagnosed in the translators’ practices after all. In his work *Die literarische Übersetzung: Theorie einer Kunstgattung*, Jirí Levý offers a comparative view between the actors’ and the translators’ practices describing the three types of bad habits translators are likely to succumb to:

1. Mannerism: instead of relying on his creative imagination the actor prefers instead his professional memory and habits; he does not portray in any way the true character of the [dramatic] figure but rather his banal understanding of people; and this he has either copied

from other performances or he repeats persistently an expressive form that he had once created. To this case one could compare the banal ‘poeticising’ and the mannerisms in translation.

2. The external characterisation of the figures: pleased that he has managed to grasp a trait of a character, the actor arranges his entire performance around that particular trait and creates an anecdotal figure; by doing so he aims at portraying not the character in his entirety but rather the one-sided notional presentation of that character. To this case one could compare the ‘tracing’ of the linguistic characteristics of the personae, the amplification of intense expressions, the unnecessary diminutives in the translation of children’s literature etc.

3. ‘Natural’ acting: in his quest for truthfulness in expression, the actor behaves according to his nature, he is ‘himself’ and experiences in a subjective manner the emotions portrayed; the result is the levelling of the figures. Similar is the case of the stylistic levelling of the artwork by the translator’s own style] [my translation] (62-63).¹⁵²

Levý’s observations, which admittedly bear a remarkable resemblance to the ones Stanislavsky makes in his own work, seem to confirm that it is not unlikely for a translator to make such creative choices that would allow his or her work to be characterised by mannerisms, flatness or lifelessness in the same way that a Stanislavskian actor-craftsman’s performance can. Levý is not alone in making such a claim. Translators themselves admit to seeking ways that would help them escape their habitual practices. Martin Crimp, for example, describes translating a classical play as a “linguistic work-out”, one of its main advantages being that “it breaks some of [the translators’] habits, and it pushes [them] towards areas of vocabulary that might not be on [their] usual menu” (qtd. in Logan). Although neither Crimp nor Levý go into detail about the reasons that are likely to lead

¹⁵² The abstract reads in the original German: “1. Der Manierismus: anstatt auf die schöpferische Phantasie verläßt sich der Schauspieler auf sein professionelles Gedächtnis und seine Angewohnheiten; er drückt keineswegs den wirklichen Charakter der Gestalten aus, sondern seine banalen Vorstellungen von den Menschen; und die hat er entweder bei anderen Theatervorstellungen abgeschaut, oder er wiederholt beharrlich eine Ausdrucksform, die er sich einmal geschaffen hat. – Man vergleiche das banale ‘Poetisieren’, die Sentimentalität und die Manierismen in Übersetzung. 2. Die äußere Charakterisierung der Gestalten: aus Freude darüber, daß er irgendeinen Charakterzug der Gestalt erfaßt hat, ordnet der Schauspieler seine ganze Leistung diesem Charakterzug unter und schafft damit eine anekdotische Figur; er richtet sich somit keineswegs nach dem Charakter in seiner Gesamtheit, sondern nach seiner einseitigen theoretischen Vorstellung von diesem Charakter. – Man vergleiche das ‘Nachzeichnen’ der sprachlichen Charakteristik der Personen, die Verstärkung intensiver Ausdrücke, die überflüssigen Diminutiva in den Übersetzungen von Kinderliteratur usw. 3. Das ‘natürliche’ Spiel: in dem Streben nach Wahrhaftigkeit des Ausdrucks handelt der Schauspieler nach seiner eigenen Natur, er ist ‘er selbst’ und erlebt subjektiv die dargestellten Gefühle; das Ergebnis ist eine Nivellierung der Gestalten. Ganz ähnlich verhält es sich bei der stilistischen Nivellierung der Vorlagen durch den eigenen Stil des Übersetzers”.

translators to an actor-craftsman's behaviour, one could assume that the explanation the latter offers in his critique about actors' portrayals could also hold for the case of the translators.

It is, however, Levý's final comment that is of particular importance from a Stanislavskian perspective as one of its aspects is related to the theoretical or philosophical side of the notion of *artistic expression*. According to Levý's understanding, the translators' style of writing can be so powerful that it can on occasion flatten or even overshadow the playwright's own way of writing. David Johnston appears to acknowledge this when he argues in the introduction of *Stages of Translation* that as a drama translator he developed a "growing awareness of the difficulty of avoiding an interaction between [his] own voice as translator and the voice of the original author, of the impossibility of producing a seamless second garment through some process of invisible stitching" (6). An example of a translator's voice covering at times the author's own voice can arguably be found, for instance, in David Hare's account, who narrates that when Richard Eyre read his version of Brecht's *Galileo*, he told him that "he found it a little disturbing because he could half hear [his] rhythm and half hear Brecht's" (142).

The dominance of the translator's over the author's writing style is particularly problematic from a Stanislavskian actor's point of view for two reasons. The first one is because it appears to distract one's attention from the characters, which together with the author inevitably disappear the minute the voice of the translator appears: when Eyre started listening to Hare, he stopped listening not only to Brecht but also to the dramatic figure of Galileo. From Stanislavsky's perspective, however, the play's recipients need to be able to perceive the characters without any distortions, as it is through them that they will make contact with their creator. A System actor cannot allow, for example, his or her own way of walking or talking to dictate how the character will walk and talk. Stanislavsky

borrowed this notion of unobstructed view from Tolstoy's definition of art. According to Henry Gifford, art or an artwork for Tolstoy "should be utterly transparent, a medium which may perhaps clarify the feeling [of the artist] but does not transmute it, or exploit it for aesthetic ends" (64). What is peculiar to the case of the art of the stage, however, is that the artist's and the artwork's role need to be reversed. As R.I.G. Hughes points out, returning to the story of the boy's narration of his actual or imaginary encounter with a wolf, "the transparency Tolstoy demands of the artwork is achieved by [the] emotional fusion" of the boy with his role: the boy becomes "both artist and artwork, artist in the sense that he [evokes] the relevant feelings in himself, and artwork in that he is the vehicle by which they are conveyed to the audience" (40). By being simultaneously both artist and artwork or, as Strasberg puts it, "at once the piano and pianist" (qtd. in Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 111), it is the boy/actor/artist who needs to disappear in order not to distract the audience from experiencing the creator's feelings and not the medium/character/artwork, as Tolstoy postulates. As Stanislavsky points out, when the actor has delved into the dramatic character, "for him 'the part and I' no longer exist[s], but what exists is 'I-the part', since his own individual 'I' has disappeared" (*Stanislavsky on the Art of the Stage* 174). In order to achieve this invisibility through coalescence, however, Stanislavskian actors need to ensure that no characteristic that is likely to reveal their presence inside the dramatic characters is to be uncovered.

Yet, is it possible for translators to avoid denoting their presence in the playwright's creation? Can they free themselves from their style, from their own distinct, idiosyncratic *parole* that could inform the work's recipients of their voice? As was pointed out at the end of the previous chapter, monitoring one's own use of language alone is a nearly impossible task. Self-contradictory as it may sound, however, one could argue that such a linguistic

effacing appears to be both possible and impossible. To illustrate this, let us consider the following comment by actor, director and writer Stephen Fry.

“I can no more change my language and the sum of its discourses than I can add a cubit to my height or, sadly it seems, take a pound from my weight. Well, perhaps that’s going a little far. I can attempt to disguise my language, I can dress it up into even more elaborate and grandiose orotundity, prolixity and self-consciousness ... or I could dress it down into something stripped. Stark. Bare. Simple. It would be hard to dress it down into something raggedly demotic without it being a patronising pastiche of a street argot to which I quite evidently have no access and in whose mazy slang avenues I would soon get lost, innit? In a sense I am typecast linguistically and although I can for fun try on all kinds of brogues and dialect clothes, my voice, my style, my language is as distinctive as my fingerprints” (“Don’t Mind Your Language”).

Fry’s witty observation brings to the fore two main points. The first one is that although one cannot annihilate oneself linguistically, one can camouflage one’s language convincingly enough to create the illusion of it genuinely belonging to a different person. Considering this, one could consequently suggest that translators could become invisible after all but in an indirect manner, i.e. not by hiding themselves but by making someone else appear instead. Fry’s second point, however, is that there is always the possibility of something giving away the true identity of the speaker. According to Eugene Nida, such revelation is inescapable as according to his understanding “the human translator ... inevitably leaves the stamp of his own personality on any translation he makes” (*Toward a Science of Translating*, 154). In a similar manner Anthea Bell maintains that any attempt on behalf of the translator to hide his or her linguistic personality is bound to fail. As she points out,

“In presenting a foreign text in English I would wish it to pass the language barrier as if seen through [a] perfectly clear, transparent pane of glass, but I’m well aware that a translation is more likely to resemble [a] pane with slight distortions. Translators may try to keep themselves out of the end product entirely, but something will almost inevitably slip in” (59).

Interestingly enough Nida and Bell's conviction of how futile it is for translators to strive to eliminate from their work their linguistic *rubber stamps*, appears to coincide with Stanislavsky's own suggestion that by being simultaneously artists and mediums, it is not possible for actors to avoid themselves either. As Stanislavsky points out to one of his pupils, "You never lose yourself on stage You always act in your own person as artist There's no walking away from yourself" (qtd. in Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 111). His caution may seem on the surface to oppose his own argumentation on the actor's invisibility, but upon careful consideration one can see how it does not. According to Stanislavsky's understanding, an actor's creative energy needs to be exhausted and contained within the boundaries of the character. Although these boundaries may be extended through the actor's personality, they may not be crossed over. This means that System actors may neither allow their presence to obscure the dramatic characters, nor attempt to mutate themselves into them for that, aside from being an extremely dangerous state to be in, would also be impossible to achieve and maintain throughout the duration of the performances. Their invisibility is to be achieved not by yielding to either extreme but by staying within the characters' framework and finding the proper measure in which their own and the characters' personality can coexist. By the same token one could suggest that translators – who are required to create under similar restrictions, as they can neither impose their own style on the text and prevent its recipient from observing the author and his or her characters, nor endeavour to linguistically wipe themselves out, for that would be unfeasible – will also need to find the golden mean between their own and the author's/characters' voice in order for their creation to comply with the Stanislavskian principles.

The second problematic point from the System's perspective about the submission of the author's style to that of the translator concerns its reception and evaluation. Returning to Eyre's description of the dominance Hare's rhythm over Brecht's as *disturbing*, one could argue that the acclaimed British director's reaction appears to correspond directly to the way Stanislavsky appraises his actors' failure to stay within their characters. It is, however, in a more unforgiving and uncompromisingly forthright manner that Stanislavsky maintains that by deviating from the absolute portrayal of the dramatic characters and being exposed, actors do nothing less than betray the art of theatre. If their exposure is conscious and deliberate, then, according to Stanislavsky, they are to be regarded not simply as traitors but also as exploiters of their art. Seen from a translational perspective, however, translators who seek to break the illusion of their invisibility or who, without necessarily breaking it, attach to it their own distinct creative signature are hardly considered to be perpetrating a moral crime against the art of translation.

The notions of visibility and invisibility carry a particular weight within the theory of translation studies. According to Lawrence Venuti, the idea of translators being in a position to choose between revealing and concealing their presence as well as the true origin of the ST "has been given various formulations, past and present, but perhaps none so decisive as that offered by the German theologian and philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher" (*The Translator's Invisibility* 19). In his seminal treatise *On The Different Methods Of Translating*, Schleiermacher expressed his view on the translator's rendering choices in the following manner: "Either the translator leaves the writer alone as much as possible and moves the reader toward the writer, or he leaves the reader alone as much as possible and moves the writer toward the reader" (42). By granting translators the freedom to use either "a transparent, fluent, 'invisible' style in order to minimise the foreignness of the TT" or "a non-fluent or estranging translation style designed to make visible the

presence of the translator by highlighting the foreign identity of the ST” (Munday 146-147), Schleiermacher sanctions both strategies; yet this dichotomy has led to an inevitable split among translators. According to Nida, for example, translators “must be content to be like [their] author, for it is not [their] business to try to excel him” (*Toward a Science of Translating* 151), they “must exert every effort to reduce to a minimum any intrusion of [themselves] that is not in harmony with the intent of the original author” (ibid. 154) and they need to aim in their translations “at complete naturalness of expression [that would] relate the receptor to modes of behaviour relevant within the context of his own culture” (ibid. 159). In a similar manner Franz Schoenberger argues that the translator “must possess the self-denial not ‘to seek his own’ but only to reflect the artistic personality of the original author” (qtd. in Wellwarth 143) and that Norman Shapiro maintains that although both his “ego and personality are involved in translating, [he has] to try to stay faithful to the basic text in such a way that [his] own personality doesn’t show” (qtd. in Venuti 8).

According to Sherry Simon, on the other hand, the recognition of a translator’s distinct writing style in the TT is not necessarily something unwanted. As she points out in her article “Translation and Cultural Politics in Canada”, “any good translation reveals some traces of the ‘second’ hand which produced it” (195). Simon’s view of the traces of the “translator’s signature” (ibid. 195) as a sign of a *good* translation appears to be shared also by Antoine Berman, who considers “receiving the Foreign as Foreign” as the “properly ethical aim of the translating act” (285) as well as by George Steiner, who, as mentioned earlier, cautions translators about the asphyxiation of the writer’s voice by the intake of the foreign. In a similar manner Venuti also supports the translators’ visibility and advocates the source text’s foreignization as a means of “resistancy [that] seeks to free the reader of the translation, as well as the translator, from the cultural constraints that ordinarily govern

their reading and writing and threaten to overpower and domesticate the foreign text, annihilating its foreignness” (305).

Contrary to these two opposite schools of thought, however, which by cancelling each other’s principles out make it rather impossible for one to assess the artistic legitimacy of a translator’s choices, Stanislavsky’s reasoning provides one with a more definitive way of evaluating a translator/artist’s work. To illustrate this, let us consider the case of Ranjit Bolt. Discussing with David Johnston the power rhyme has in a dramatic text, Bolt gives the following account of what happened when he translated Pierre Corneille’s play *The Liar*:

“One of my favourite things ... happened in rehearsal, just before we started the show, when I suddenly thought, ‘Oh, I’ve got a joke here’. It went:

Why did he bother spouting all that tosh?
He surely must have known it wouldn’t wash.
He lies to everybody will-nilly.
Whoever heard of anything so stupid?

The audience burst out laughing every night at that. ... To some extent it is Bolt and not Corneille, and yet it works because it’s frothy funny, it’s light and it’s what Corneille would have liked. I like to think he was looking down and saying ‘*ce n’est pas Corneille, mais ça marche*’. ... I’m comfortable with [the idea that the translation shouldn’t be invisible] in this case because I do think I can do things in verse which are funny” (Bolt, 252-253).

Seen from a translational point of view Bolt does not appear to have broken any artistic/translational laws: he maintained the function of the play by making the audience laugh, he denoted and communicated his presence to the spectators and his translational choices do not appear to have distorted or altered the characters or the message of the scene. Furthermore, his decision to translate Corneille’s alexandrine couplets using rhyming couplets constitutes a perfectly legitimate choice adopted by other contemporaries of his such as Noel Clark, for example, who used it for the rendering of other plays written

by the French playwright such as *The Cid* and *Cinna*. Moreover, even if one were to consider Bolt's decisions as not completely conforming to the notion of translation, one could always classify his work as an adaptation or version and thereby grant him the necessary artistic freedom that would justify his choices.

Seen from a Stanislavskian artist's perspective, on the other hand, where such gradations of artistic expression do not exist, Bolt has both betrayed and exploited his art for a single reason: his motivation behind his last minute addition had arguably nothing to do with serving any of the play's characters, or for that matter its author or its plot, but was related only to his own ambition to exhibit his talent to the spectators. As Bolt acknowledges in another instance, his aim when translating for the stage is to be "as charming or as amusing as possible" to the audience "while remaining true only to the spirit of the original text" (qtd. in Logan). "If I think, 'There is a good laugh and Molière hasn't got it,'" Bolt continues, "then I'll put an extra couplet in" (ibid). Bolt's reasoning is clearly incompatible with the principles that govern the actions of a Stanislavskian artist of the *theatre of experiencing*, as his stance resembles rather that of the actor-craftsmen who consciously and deliberately seek to please their audience and "with impressive self-confidence, assurance and aplomb [seek to] put themselves in direct touch with the public, passing right by the actors playing opposite them" (*An Actor Prepares* 204).

Summarising our discussion on the second pillar of Stanislavsky's *theatre of experiencing*, one could argue that his understanding of *experiencing* as *artistic* or *truthful expression* appears to resemble in a way the photographic negative of his notion of *emotional identification*; a list of practical and theoretical don'ts standing opposite the respective list of do's of the first pillar of the System. Seen from that perspective, Stanislavsky's pressing requirement on his actors to acquire a perfect understanding of and command over the pauses and punctuation of the dramatic text and to eliminate from their

portrayals any sign of mechanical acting and over-acting can be thought to serve as a checkpoint on a clear line of demarcation. According to Stanislavsky's reasoning, this line separates nature from artificiality, truth from falsehood, and the morality of art from the opportunism of craft. Before being granted permission to enter onto the stage and represent the System's *theatre of experiencing* in front of the audience, the actors' portrayals and ethos need to undergo an artistic quality control that would verify that they are freed from any form of untruthfulness and pretence.

Compared to the rigid framework within which Stanislavsky's actors are requested to operate, translators seem to enjoy a greater freedom in their work as they may take liberties with the way they handle the dramatic work's punctuation as well as with the way they transfer the play's visible and invisible pauses from one language into another. In a similar manner they also appear to show greater tolerance when it comes to evaluating the artistic integrity of their creations. This, however, is not due to some kind of ideological dissimilarity. As it will become evident in the chapter to follow, which deals with the influence an actor's and a translator's creation has or ought to have on its recipients, the way in which actors and translators appraise their creations may have a purely practical impact not only the relationship they separately enjoy with the members of the audience but also on the one they themselves share.

Chapter VI

The Art of Experiencing As Infectiousness

Inextricably linked to the *artistic expression* of the actors' portrayals of the dramatic characters is Stanislavsky's notion of *infectiousness*. The main source Stanislavsky draws his inspiration from for this third and final pillar of his advocated *theatre of experiencing* is yet again Tolstoy's definition of art. For Tolstoy *infectiousness* constitutes not only an imperative for but also a measure of true art:

"The stronger the infection, the better art is as art, regardless of its content – that is independently of the worth of the feelings it conveys. Art becomes more or less infectious owing to three conditions: (1) the greater or lesser particularity of the feeling conveyed; (2) the greater or lesser clarity with which the feeling is conveyed; and (3) the artist's sincerity, that is, the greater or lesser force with which the artist himself experiences the feelings he conveys" (121).

References to Tolstoy's three conditions that define the level of an artwork's *infectiousness* are also to be found in Stanislavsky's own work. According to Stanislavsky, his actors need to keep in mind that "the more delicate the feeling, the more it requires precision [and] clarity" (*An Actor Prepares* 107), that their portrayals "should have value and content [and] must not be shallow, or skim along the surface", and they need to be "clear cut and typical [and] tolerate no vagueness" (ibid. 119). According to R. I. G. Hughes, however, there is an additional fourth parameter in Tolstoy's understanding of *infectiousness* regarding "the relation between the artwork and the beholder", which raises a particular problem for Stanislavsky (40). The "reception problem", as Hughes chooses to term it (ibid. 40), lies not in the nature of the criteria Tolstoy uses to assess the quality of a work of art but rather in the fact that he allows no distinction to be made between the feeling the artwork can be said to express and the feeling that it ought to elicit in its recipients. According to Tolstoy's reasoning, the recipients of a work of art need to be "infected by the same feeling [its creator] has experienced" for the attainment of true art to

be complete (39). It is at this point that Stanislavsky and Tolstoy's understanding of the notion of *infectiousness* partly diverge.

As Jonathan Pitches rightly notices, Stanislavsky's understanding of the theatrical action-reaction continuum is not that of "an equal or symmetrical arrangement" of stimulus and response but rather that of "a cumulative and ever-intensifying process" of communication between reversible senders and receivers (*Science and the Stanislavsky Tradition of Acting* 36). What one needs to keep in mind, however, is that it is not only the members of the audience who receive and respond to the actors' performance but also their fellow actors with whom they share the stage. Distinguishing between the communication involving only the actors onstage and that concerning the actors and the audience, or what Manfred Pfister terms "internal and external communication" respectively (26), Stanislavsky argues that whereas contact in the former case is "direct and conscious", in the latter case "it is indirect and unconscious" (*An Actor Prepares* 203). The distinction he makes between direct and indirect recipients of the actors' work leads him inevitably to adopt a double standard with respect to the effect the performers' creation ought to aim at eliciting from them. When talking about the "process of mutual intercourse with [their] partner[s]" (ibid. 199) Stanislavsky agrees with Tolstoy and maintains that the actors-senders need to make "certain [that their] thoughts have penetrated [the actors-receivers'] consciousness" (ibid. 202). When discussing in his work the effect a performance might have on the members of the audience, on the other hand, he refrains systematically not only from prescribing it as the actors' duty to evoke in them the same emotions they experience on stage but also, conversely, from prognosticating the spectators' infection with the emotions experienced by the actors. Although he recognises that by "watching the actors, the spectators themselves become infected with [and] emotionally involved in the life of the stage" ("On Various Trends" 179), Stanislavsky prefers to speak in more general terms

about the precise nature of the resulting effect the performers' portrayals are most likely to elicit in them using expressions like "striking a chord in [their] hearts" (*Stanislavsky On the Art of the Stage* 200), coming to a "heart-to-heart communion" with them ("On Various Trends" 179) or "have impressions sink deep in their hearts, take root and remain forever a part of their being" ("On Reaching the Public" 129).

There are two reasons that can be thought to have led Stanislavsky to steer clear of what R. I. G. Hughes describes as the "dubious assumptions that underlie Tolstoy's epidemiological idiom" as far as the relation between the actors and the spectators is concerned (45). The first one becomes evident through a *reductio ad absurdum*: were Stanislavsky's actors to be aiming at evoking in their audience particular responses, then they could not be considered as true artists of the theatre of experiencing. As was pointed out in the previous chapter, it is only the actors of the theatre of craft who deliberately seek to amuse or move the spectators of the performance and for Stanislavsky such an attitude towards the audience constitutes "nothing more or less than exhibitionism" (*An Actor Prepares* 205).

The second reason concerns the non-linear order in which information reaches the audience. In the case of the balcony scene in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, the spectators know that Romeo is hiding in Juliet's garden before she finds out about it. This means that although they can observe, understand and recognise as genuine her surprise when she sees him, they cannot experience the emotion itself. The same can be argued to hold also for the news regarding Treplev's failed suicide attempt in *The Seagull*, which reaches first the characters and then the audience, only in this case it is the spectators who need to catch up with the experience of the dramatic personae. The non-sequential manner in which the members of the audience are informed about the dramatic characters' life and actions means that they can hardly ever experience the events of the play in the

same way the actors/characters do. The spectators constitute therefore, in Stanislavsky's words, "an accidental witness" ("Conversation" 134) of the direct "emotional and intellectual exchange" between the performers (Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares* 197), whose attention needs to be magnetised by what happens on the stage.¹⁵³ Keeping in mind that the actors cannot address directly the members of the audience, this means that the latter need to be absorbed into the fictional world and characters in an oblique manner. As Stanislavsky points out to his pupils,

"... the spectators in the theatre can understand and indirectly participate in what goes on the stage only while [the] intercourse continues among the actors. If actors really mean to hold the attention of a large audience they must make every effort to maintain an interrupted exchange of feelings, thoughts and actions among themselves" (*An Actor Prepares* 197).

In order to maintain the communication flow amongst them unbroken, continues Stanislavsky, actors should not attempt to delude themselves into seeing or hearing non-existent objects, as they run the risk of being dissociated from their colleagues who share the stage with them:

"What torture to play opposite an actor who looks at you and yet sees someone else, who constantly adjusts himself to that other person and not you. Such actors are separated from the very persons with whom they should be in closest relationship. They cannot take in your words, your intonations, or anything else. Their eyes are veiled as they look at you" (ibid. 202-203).

The fact that their attention "must not be in the auditorium" (Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares* 75) but concentrated on what happens on stage does not mean, however, that the

¹⁵³ It is arguably with a similar thought in mind that Sir Ralph Richardson amusingly maintained that "the art of acting consists of keeping people from coughing" (qtd. in Williams 26)

actors should intentionally disregard the members of the audience by attempting to convince themselves that they do not exist. As Vakhtangov points out to his pupils,

“Why persuade yourself that there are no spectators when they’re there, two or three yards away, living, watching, breathing, coughing, laughing! ... This forcible alienation from the audience is senseless, it contradicts the very essence of acting. Stanislavsky says so too” (qtd. in Gorchakov 18).

Indeed, according to Stanislavsky, the actors of the theatre of *experiencing* should not turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to the audience present as by attempting to impose upon themselves such a misleading belief they risk missing the opportunity to experience the spectators’ response. Answering his imaginary pupils’ naïve remark that in return for their performance actors get nothing more than “applause and flowers” from the spectators, Stanislavsky maintains in one of the rare passages characterised by a distinct scientific flavour that the members of the audience constitute the actors’ “spiritual acoustics” giving back “what they receive from [them] as living, human emotions” (*An Actor Prepares* 204). “If you want to learn to appreciate what you get from the public,” Stanislavsky points out to his fictional class, “let me suggest that you give a performance to a completely empty hall. Would you care to do that? No! Because to act without a public is like singing in a place without resonance” (ibid. 204).

Stanislavsky’s notion of *infectiousness* appears to be characterised by two main themes. The first one concerns the influence of the actors’ portrayals on the recipients of their performance. The question of their work’s impact has always been a major concern for translators as well, underpinning the debate described in the previous chapter regarding their responsibility to hide or not their presence in their translations and to erase or not the traces of the foreign from it. The division between those among translators who support the source text’s domestication and those who advocate against it has inevitably led to two

opposing views on the desired response a translated work ought to aim at eliciting from its recipients. For Eugene Nida, as well as for a number of other translation scholars such as Matthew Arnold and Alexander Souter, for instance, whom Nida quotes in his work *Toward a Science of Translating* (163-164), a translator's work ought to evoke in its target recipients a response similar to that the work's original or source recipients can be assumed to have experienced. For Lawrence Venuti, on the other hand, a translation's aim ought to be "to stage an alien reading experience" for its target recipients (20).

At first glance, neither line of reasoning appears to be compatible with the principles of Stanislavsky's notion of *infectiousness*. Considering each theory separately, one could suggest that the problem with Venuti's suggested foreignisation is that it favours distraction over absorption, observation and alienation over recognition and identification. As such it lies conceptually closer to Brecht's notion of *Entfremdung*, which seeks to create a monitoring distance between the actor and the character as well as between the audience and the spectacle, rather than to Stanislavsky's *infectiousness*, which aims at the exact opposite, i.e. to bridge the gap between actors, characters and spectators.

What seems to be problematic about Nida's dynamic or functional equivalence from Stanislavsky's point of view, on the other hand, is that it advocates in a rather Tolstoyan manner the evocation of the same or a similar response between different recipients to the creator's work, a condition that, as was already mentioned, Stanislavsky did not fully endorse as far as his *theatre of experiencing* was concerned.

In addition to the two reasons that render Nida and Venuti's proposed translation strategies separately incompatible with Stanislavsky's *infectiousness*, there appears to be a third one that both theories share, namely their intentionality or prescriptivism. Regardless of their difference in aims, both Nida and Venuti promote the attainment of particular effecting results. Stanislavsky, on the other hand, convinced that "in real art, influence

proceeds of itself” (qtd. in Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus* 111), cautioned his pupils against commencing on their work having particular outcomes in mind:

“Speak up so that [the spectator] can hear you, place yourself in the right parts of the stage so that he can see you, but for the rest, forget entirely about the audience and put your mind solely on the characters in the play. It is not for the actor to be interested in the spectator but the other way around; the spectator should be engrossed in the actor. The best way to be in contact with the audience is to be in close relationship to the characters in the play” (“Conversation” 134).

Considering Stanislavsky’s advice to his actors to regard their creative work as an open-ended process as far as the audience’s reaction is concerned, one is tempted to liken his reasoning to Walter Benjamin’s, who in a rather similar manner argued that “in the appreciation of a work of art or an art form, consideration of the receiver never proves fruitful” (15). Art, according to Benjamin, is not concerned with the recipient’s reaction. “No poem is intended for the reader, no picture for the beholder, no symphony for the listener,” writes the German philosopher maintaining that since “the original does not exist for the reader’s sake” neither should “the translation be understood on the basis of this premise” (ibid. 15-16). Despite sharing the same anti-Tolstoyan view as far as the predetermination of an artwork’s effect on its recipients is concerned, however, there is something that sets Stanislavsky and Benjamin apart and that is the type of recipient each of the two men has in mind. The recipients Benjamin refers to, i.e. the reader, the beholder and the listener, stand in an immediate or, perhaps better put, in a direct relationship to the creator’s work, i.e. the poem, the picture and the symphony respectively. According to Stanislavsky’s reasoning, on the other hand, the direct recipients of an actor’s work are not the members of the audience, as one might have expected, but rather his or her fellow actors with whom he or she shares the stage. This consequently means that whereas Benjamin cautions translators against taking into consideration the direct recipients of their

work when transferring texts from one language into another, Stanislavsky does not wish his actor to be thinking about the indirect recipients of their creations when performing a play. Since Benjamin and Stanislavsky refer to different types of recipients, their apparent agreement on how the artwork's creator ought to behave toward them is inevitably rendered immaterial.

Interestingly enough, however, it seems that Stanislavsky's understanding of the actors as the direct and the spectators as the indirect recipients of a dramatic work could be applied to the case of translating for the stage. Given that the work of a translator is to be performed, one could accordingly suggest that the actors as readers constitute the first and therefore the direct recipients of the translated work, whereas the spectators as listeners and viewers are its second and consequently its indirect ones. The fact that translators need to consider the actors as the primary recipients of their work is a view shared also by several drama translation scholars and practitioners. According to David Johnston, for example, translating for the stage "is about writing for the actors" ("Theatre Pragmatics" 58). Phyllis Zatlin brings forward a similar suggestion when arguing that "translators, like playwrights, should write for actors" (4), an opinion shared also by Ortrun Zuber who maintains that drama translators ought to follow the example of "the greatest dramatists – such as Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Molière, Shakespeare – [who] did not intend to write literature [but] were writing for actors" (92-93).¹⁵⁴ In a similar manner both Michael Frayn (204) and Roger Pulver agree that "translating is no different from writing one's own play," with the latter also adding that the task of the translator "is to give the actor the greatest possible chance to move others" (28). Needless to say, playwrights themselves appear also

¹⁵⁴ Zuber's comment is admittedly open to an additional interpretation, namely that these great dramatists wrote their plays with a particular actor or actress in mind, as was the case, for example, with "Shakespeare [who] probably wrote passages with Richard Burbage or Kemp in mind [and] Tennessee Williams [who] considered Anna Magnana as the best actress for the Serafina in his *Rose Tattoo*" (Link 43). Setting aside whether or not the same can be said to hold also for the Athenian dramatists or Molière, the fact remains that playwrights are fully aware that actors are going to be the direct recipients of their works.

to consider the actors as the primary recipients of their work. Already in the first pages of his work *Acting as Reading: The Place of the Reading Process in the Actor's Work* playwright David Cole, for example, points out: "I am a playwright, which is to say, a writer whose readership is composed of actors. Like any writer, I feel I have a stake in understanding how my readers read, and for a playwright this means understanding how *actors read*" (3).¹⁵⁵

The Stanislavskian classification of the actors as the direct and the spectators as the indirect recipients of a translated play, despite rendering Benjamin incompatible with Stanislavsky's understanding of *infectiousness*, offers a new prism through which one could observe the aforementioned theories of Nida and Venuti, which also refer to the relationship between the creator and the direct recipient of his or her work. Surprisingly, whereas Venuti's call for the evocation of an alienating effect remains incompatible with Stanislavsky even when seen from this new viewpoint, Nida's prescriptive principle of equivalent effect appears now to lie much closer to Stanislavsky's reasoning than was originally suggested: both men are in agreement that the direct recipients of the artwork have to be infected with the same thoughts and emotions someone else has already experienced or for that matter is experiencing at that moment.

Their agreement on the nature of the artwork's impact does not suffice, however, for Nida and Stanislavsky's theories to be considered as well matched. As was pointed out earlier, according to the American scholar translators ought to model the response they aim at eliciting from the translated text's target recipients not on their own but rather on the source recipients' reaction toward the original creation. For Stanislavsky's actors, on the other hand, such an experiential *tertium quid* does not exist; the actors need to infect their fellow actors with their own emotions and thoughts. What could arguably bring

¹⁵⁵ The emphasis added is to be found in the original.

Stanislavsky and Nida together, however, is an observation Peter Fawcett makes in his work *Translation and Language: Linguistic Theories Explained* regarding the implications of applying Nida's functional equivalence to the case of translation. According to Fawcett, one of the problems raised by Nida's expectation that a translation elicit in its target recipients the same response the original creation did in its source recipients is that it is impossible for one to know what exactly was "the response to a text from a culture distant in time and space" (59). This means, continues Fawcett, that "any equivalent effect a translator aims for can only be an equivalence to the effect [the original creation had] on the translator and not on the original readers" (ibid. 59). Given that Fawcett is right in his assumption, i.e. that it is possible for translators to elicit an *equivalent effect* from the recipients of their work provided that they seek to communicate to them the effect the original creation has had on themselves, one could argue that his observation accidentally provides the missing link that could bridge not only Nida and Stanislavsky's but also Tolstoy's principles in the case of translating for the stage: an artist or a creator who cannot do otherwise than aim at infecting the direct recipients of his or her work, that is the actors, with the effect the original creation has had on him- or herself without thinking about the indirect recipients of the translated work, that is the members of the audience, is arguably as close as one can come to describing a drama translator in terms of a Stanislavskian actor and to placing him or her at the centre of Stanislavsky's notion of *infectiousness*.

Yet can translators afford to commence on their work having exclusively the recipients of the stage in mind and not those sitting in the auditorium, as Stanislavsky's actors ought to? Considering our previous discussion on the various viewpoints those translating for the stage need to simultaneously maintain when transferring a dramatic work from one language into another, such a goal seems to be unattainable. By exploring, however, the relationship translators enjoy with the actors and the spectators and examining

their main concerns with regard to each of these two groups of receptors, it will become evident that it is not impossible for translators to shift at least a part of their attention allocated to the spectators from the auditorium to the stage. The relationship between the artists and the recipients of their work constitutes also the second theme in Stanislavsky's notion of *infectiousness*.

Starting off with the translators' concerns with regard to the performers, one could argue that these are primarily related to two aspects of the aural presentation of the text. The first one involves the actors' delivery of the characters' lines. According to Lars Hamberg, the translators of the stage need to aim at producing "an easy and natural dialogue [as] otherwise the actors [would] have to struggle with lines which sound unnatural and stilted" (92). The fact that the translators' work is likely to feel "like straw in the mouth" of the actors, as Michael Meyer points out (48), is arguably what leads Neil Bartlett concede the performers' point vis-à-vis being excessively concerned with the delivery of their lines. "The only thing the actors want to know," writes Bartlett, "is 'How do we say it?', and they are right. How *do* we say it, how *do* you get this thing into your mouth?" (68). Both Jiri Levý (128) and George E. Wellwarth concur that the phonetic layer of the translated text is likely to cause problems to the actors. As the latter points out, "the dramatic translator must watch out for particularly is an excess of sibilants in a sentence, or awkward consonantal clusters that may make a line hard to pronounce rapidly and thus may cause difficulties in sound projection" (141). However descriptive Wellwarth may appear to be in his account, Michael Meyer provides us with an example of how at least one of the two particular cases Wellwarth asks translators to be attentive to could trouble an actor:

"I remember an old lady who was rehearsing Brand's mother telling me that I had made one speech impossible for her to speak. I looked at it and it seemed all right; but then she spoke it, and I saw what she meant. I had filled it with sibilants and she had false teeth, and sounded like an express train entering a tunnel" (50).

The problems in the lines' delivery a translated work is likely to create for the actors and the fact that these obstacles may go unnoticed by the translators themselves lie at the heart of the second aspect of the text's auditory presentation that translators are concerned about with regard to the performers: the contribution of the actors as well as of the other artists participating in the construction of the spectacle to the optimisation of the text's auditory layer. According to Wellwarth, translators need to take the actors' opinion into account as they "have the inestimable advantage of being good listeners and having a finely tuned ear for what sounds well on stage and at the same time 'lies easily on the tongue'" (141). In a similar manner Michael Meyer also maintains that during the rehearsals actors "often ... make suggestions which are positive improvements" on the translator's work (50).

Despite the confidence Wellwarth and Meyer seem to have in the actors' ability to diagnose what would best suit the aural needs of their characters' portrayal, however, not all translators appear to be equally willing to put their trust in the performers' judgment and input. Knowing that it is not unlikely for some actors to deliberately seek to exploit for their own benefit the attributed quality of being good listeners, Peter Meyer warns translators that "one of the problems of attending rehearsals is the actor who habitually wants to re-write every line" (135). Offering a similar warning, Noel Clark maintains that

"... translators are probably well advised to resist unilateral requests from actors to re-cast certain lines they may feel could be improved. Such suggestions are best filtered through the director who may, in any case, not agree that change is needed. Obviously the translator should be ready to consider any such requests from the director and, if convinced, re-write. Equally if he doesn't agree, he should be prepared to explain why" (31-32).

Clark's caution to the translators not to deal directly with the actors but to channel

their observations through the director of the performance first is also shared by Peter Meyer, who in an identical manner points out that “it is important that notes should be given to the director, never to the actors” (135). In his account Adrian Mitchell provides us with an example of what is likely to happen when a translator chooses to challenge the particular *modus operandi*. While working on Peter Weiss’s play *Marat/Sade*, Mitchell narrates that he “rewrote a line and gave it to an actor without showing it to Peter [Brook] first” (242). The acclaimed director’s immediate reaction caused him to regret his decision:

“I was subjected to the glare of these twin icebergs he uses for eyes when he feels like it. I’ve never forgotten that, and I have never done it again. I am very well behaved. I write, I go home at night, I don’t whisper into actors’ ears. At home in the evening I write a long memo to the director about anything that has happened that I like, don’t like, any word suggestions I have and my rewrites and things like that. I then give it to the director” (242).

Despite the fact that Mitchell, Meyer and Clark are clearly in agreement with the majority of translators who believe that all changes regarding the characters’ lines need to be cleared with the director of the performance first, it is not unlikely for translators to make an exception in the case of requests coming from the company’s leading or most prominent and experienced actors or actresses. An example of such a case can arguably be found in Michael Meyer’s article “On Translating Plays”:

“When Sir Lawrence Olivier was rehearsing *Borkman* for television in 1958, he asked me if I could lengthen a certain line which he had to deliver walking towards a window, so that he could turn at the window on the final word. I checked with the original, and found that I had in fact written a shorter line than Ibsen, so that the actor was unconsciously asking that I should get closer to the original” (50).

There are two particularly interesting points in Meyer’s account that need to be noticed at this point. The first one concerns the actor’s attitude. Admittedly, there appears

to be no good reason for Olivier to have asked for a rewrite of his lines. Unlike the actress with the false teeth, Olivier did not suffer from a physical impediment that could prevent him either from walking faster or from speaking slower. Furthermore, the fact that we are dealing in this case with a television show and not a theatrical performance means that there ought to have been a variety of technical options available for concealing any potential gaps: the scene could have been shot from a different angle, the silent bit could have been cut out and/or replaced with another frame in the montage etc. Even if one were to argue that during the '50s or '60s the technology available to television did not allow for multi-camera filming or video editing, there is no doubt that Olivier knew from his stage experience how to 'steal', as it were, the missing extra steps when delivering his previous lines so that he could find himself standing on cue next to the window, a suggestion the director of the show could have put forward were he or she to have been asked. Provided that Meyer did not fail to include in his account any practical difficulty that rendered necessary the rewriting of Olivier's lines, one could consequently suggest that the most probable explanation for the actor's particular request is that he simply thought it would be easier to adapt the line to the movement than the other way round; an indication that perhaps translators are not being unreasonable after all when arguing that the actors' requests regarding changes in the translated work are not always justified.

The second interesting point concerns Meyer's reaction to Olivier's request. Despite not only the scepticism with which drama translators ask their colleagues to treat the actors' requests but also the fact that it probably would have been possible both for the translated lines to remain intact and for the actor's movement to be carried out as originally planned, Meyer's willingness to revisit his work upon Olivier's suggestion does not strike one as unexpected. Considering that it was not an unknown amateur but one of the most important British actors asking for a change in his lines, it seems quite reasonable for Meyer to have

considered the particular actor's dramatic instinct and experience to be of equal, if not to say of higher authority than the director's opinion and consequently to decide that he only needed to *check with the original* prior to lengthening the character's lines. What needs to be noticed, however, is that had it not been for Olivier's request, Meyer would probably not have returned to Ibsen's creation in order to seek another way to come closer to the form of the original without compromising on its content; as far as he was concerned, the character's line in English was to be a short and not a long one. Although Meyer does not comment on whether he was more or less satisfied with the new version of the particular line, Olivier's case may serve as an indication that perhaps the actors' demands, regardless of how unreasonable they may seem to be, if viewed by the translators as an opportunity for them to reassess their work rather than as a cold rejection of their effort, could lead them to discover a playwright's work anew.

Interestingly enough it is not unlikely also for actors to reach eventually a different conclusion about the translator's work after an initial negative reaction towards it. In his account Meyer puts forward such an example:

"I remember that when we were rehearsing *Miss Julie* at Chichester in 1965 Albert Finney and Maggie Smith, two highly intelligent and experienced players, several times asked whether I had not missed out some lines or got them in the wrong order. I assured them that I had not, and that there was an internal logic in the dialogue which would appear; as, after a few rehearsals it did" (ibid. 47).

Finney and Smith's case constitutes the opposite of Olivier's case in terms of the experience both the actors and the translator underwent: in the former case it was the actors who came closer to the text by trusting in the translator whereas in the latter it was the translator who upon an actor's request discovered a particular part of the text anew. Considering the antithesis between the two cases, one could argue that the translators'

relationship with the actors is characterised by what appears to be a sense of mutual distrust. What can arguably be thought to cause this lack of confidence in each other's work is the fact that both actors and translators are used to working primarily alone. The images of the translator working "in the attic" or "sitting at a desk and imagining the performance dimension", put forward respectively by Aaltonen (*Time-Sharing on Stage* 97) and Bassnett ("Translating for the Theatre" 100), are indicative of the isolated conditions under which those translating for the stage usually operate. In a similar manner, actors spend much more time working on their roles outside the theatre rather than during the rehearsals. The more actors and translators work in isolation, however, the further away they inevitably get from the realities of the creative process that takes place in the theatre. The translation scholars' and practitioners' repeated cautions to their colleagues to be particularly attentive to prosodic or gestural elements embedded in the text that "may not be immediately apparent from a straightforward reading of the written text in isolation" (Bassnett, *Translation Studies* 121) may serve as an example of the problems that are likely to arise for drama translators when their work is transferred into the reality of the stage. Actors are also confronted with similar difficulties when required to present for the first time on the stage their work done at home and act opposite another actor. In order to illustrate how fundamentally problematic the passage from the creation in solitude to the creation through collaboration is in the case of the theatre, Stanislavsky, already in the first pages of his work *An Actor Prepares*, has one of his fictional pupils, Nazvanov, who is Stanislavsky's literary persona among the students, describe such an experience in the following manner:

"To my astonishment the words did not help. In fact they bothered me, so that I should have preferred to do without them entirely, or to cut the number in half. Not only the words, but also the thought, of the poet were foreign to me. ... [N]either the setting nor the plan which I had fixed during my work at home would harmonise with the playing of Paul [his partner with whom they were to present the scene] ... I had read the text of the role by

itself, I had played the character by itself, without relating the one to the other. The words interfered with the acting, and the acting with the words” (4).

The young actor’s final comment summarises in the best way possible what one can assume happens when the translator’s and the actors’ work meet for the first time on the stage: the outer form and the inner content of what is to become the dramatic character the audience will eventually see, collide – discharging both in the direction of the actor and that of the translator a strong sense of intrusion and consequently of loss of the control both groups of professionals enjoyed over their creation when working in private. The inevitable consequence of such a clash is for both parties to instinctively seek to regain that power in order to protect their work: the actors by requesting their lines to be changed or even *cut in half*, as Nazvanov puts it, because they *interfere with their acting* and the translators by insisting that “it is [the actors’] professional duty ... to be able to speak anything” (qtd. in Jānis 358) and that any change in the lines will endanger not only the dramatic character’s presentation but also the audience’s comprehension. Even though this is not what happens in Stanislavsky’s invented classroom, considering the translators’ aforementioned accounts, one can easily imagine such a dispute breaking out in any given theatrical environment.

What also needs to be noticed, however, is the way Nazvanov reacts towards his fellow actor, Paul. Contrary to the quick and absolute manner in which Nazvanov wants the issue of the *interfering* words to be resolved, his acknowledgement that his acting needs to be *harmonised* with his partner’s performance points toward an outcome that requires a different process for its achievement. Since Paul’s portrayal can neither be completely erased nor cut to fit Nazvanov’s way of acting, both Nazvanov and Paul, who presumably underwent an experience similar to that of his partner with regard to the text and his partner’s portrayal, will need to take in each other’s creation and merge it with their own. According to Stanislavsky, such merging “requires a great deal of concentrated attention,

technique, and artistic discipline” (*An Actor Prepares* 202). As the lessons in Stanislavsky’s imaginary classroom progress, the student-actors will eventually come to understand that they also need to partner with the creator of the text and approach his or her work in a manner similar to the way they approach the performance of the actor playing opposite them; they need, in other words, to seek ways to *harmonise* rather than settle their relationship with the written work. As Stanislavsky points out,

“To become the partner of the playwright, to perform his work on the stage, the actor must not only absorb the theme as a whole but also its verbal form. He must not only know the words but take them into himself organically until he has transformed ... them into his very own” (“An Actor’s Handbook” 142).

As was seen both in the case of Meyer’s re-discovery of *John Gabriel Borkman* as well as in the case of Finney and Smith’s understanding of the inner logic in *Miss Julie*, it is not only Stanislavsky’s fictional pupils who come over time to the realisation that forming such a partnership with the artist working opposite them and approaching his or her creation not as a problem that needs to be solved but as a proposal that needs to be understood will bring them closer to their partner’s as well as to their own work. For that to be achieved, however, both parties need to be exposed to each other’s work within the same creative environment. Had Meyer not systematically attended the rehearsals of Ibsen’s plays, either because he did not wish to or because he did not have the opportunity to, neither he nor the performers would have had the opportunity to explain and understand, to ask for and provide help, in short to work on the *harmonisation* of their relationship.

Turning our attention now to the translators’ concerns with regard to the members of the audience, one could suggest that there are two points on which these differ from the respective ones regarding the actors. The first one is that contrary to the case of the performers’ needs, which can potentially be considered and dealt with on an individual

basis, translators cannot but think about the audience in a collective manner. Although Richard Fotheringham is right to maintain that “the idea that all audiences understand a play in the same or acceptably similar ways is a myth of social consensus and a homogenous society”, as every spectator is “forever bound about by subjectivity [and by] the randomness of personal experience” (29-30), one also needs to recognise that it is impossible for the translators of the stage to address the needs of each member of the audience separately.

The second point of difference is that the translators’ concerns with regard to the spectators are to be found in a way at the opposite end from their concerns about the actors’ delivery, namely at the stage of comprehension. Setting aside that part of the audience’s comprehension that is actually dependent on the actors’ delivery, such as issues of mishearing due to poor articulation, what seems to worry translators the most is the possibility of the spectators’ exclusion from the dramatic discourse due to a lack of information available to them about its creation and/or its references. Jane Lai, for example, points out with reference to the Chinese audience that the “names of deities like Apollo and Jupiter, especially uttered in heated arguments and angry oaths tend, at least for the majority of the audience unfamiliar with western mythology, to be mere nonsense syllables which bewilder and distract the audience from the dramatic climax” (149). In similar manner David Rudkin maintains that “pretty well the whole modern audience” would not be able to deduce from Amphitryon’s opening lines in Euripides’s play *Heracles* that he is the “cuckolded human husband” of Alcmene on whom Zeus had fathered Heracles (82). Accordingly David Johnston points out that only Lope de Vega’s “contemporary Spanish audience would have known the popular snatch of song that inspired the dramatist to flesh out the tale of the murder which took place on the road between Olmedo and Medina” in his work *The Gentleman From Olmedo* (*Stages of Translation* 59). These are only a few of

the examples one can find in the translators' accounts, all expressing the same fear, namely that the "culture-specific frame of reference or the paraverbal elements of the original" may prevent the target audience from coping with the characters and with the development of the plot of the dramatic work (ibid. 59).

What can be thought to provoke this fear in drama translators, and consequently to make it particularly challenging for them to re-create in the target culture the same "complicity between stage and audience" the playwright's work enjoyed in its source culture, are the constraints imposed on them by the very nature of theatre and of the dramatic text (ibid. 59). The fact, for example, that the spectators will not have access to the written text inevitably means that those translating for the stage, "unlike the translator[s] of fiction, ... cannot gloss, explain puns or ambiguities or cultural references, nor transcribe words for the sake of local colour" using footnotes, appendices or introductory notes through which ancillary information about the original creation is conventionally provided to the recipients of a translation (Newmark, *A Textbook of Translation* 172). In a similar manner translators cannot consider "including a glossary in the programme" of the performance as a "viable solution", for as Phyllis Zatlin points out, "spectators go to the theatre to see a play, not to read at length about it, and directors will quickly discard a script that requires footnotes" (71). Nor can translators aspire to insert the necessary information into the translated text itself. The concise nature of the dramatic dialogue rarely allows room for explications. As Sir Terence Rattigan rightfully points out to Michael Meyer, "what a novelist would take a page to say ... a playwright must say in no more than three lines" (qtd. in Meyer, "On Translating Plays" 45). This means in other words that, even if, for example, the Chinese translator could – depending on the reason of his evocation by the dramatic characters – add next to the name of Apollo a short sentence explaining that he is the god of either music, poetry, the arts or medicine in order to assist

his or her audience in understanding what these *nonsense syllables* mean in the fictional world of the play, such a solution would not be available to the translators of *Heracles* and of *The Gentleman From Olmedo* who would need to provide their audiences with a more elaborated account of the past of the mythical hero and of the origins of Lope's creation.

In her survey Susan Bassnett-McGuire addressed the issue of the audience's comprehension and sought to find out how drama translators prefer to handle cases "where the original text involves references to laws, customs, traditions, individuals, places, events etc., that have no meaning without extensive explanation" in the target language ("The Translator in the Theatre" 42). The participating professionals were to choose between five different strategies, namely "a) remove all such references in the final version; b) leave them intact with footnotes; c) attempt to find equivalents; d) assess each case on its relevance to the text as a whole and use any/all the above methods; e) use any other devices" (ibid. 42). This is how Bassnett-McGuire summarised the results in her article:

"The majority of replies opted for *d*, with only one choosing to use footnotes, which was perhaps predictable. However, about twenty per cent felt that solution *a*, ... was best, and of the almost equal number who preferred *c*, most used the term 'analogue' rather than 'equivalent'. Several suggested the addition of explanatory dialogue, but again only a small number considered discussing the issues with the actors and the director" (ibid. 42-43).

As one might have expected, translators appear clearly not to be willing to take any risks when it comes to maximising the audience's level of comprehension. By adding the twenty per cent of translators who opts for the removal of all references to the twenty per cent who favours the references' substitution, it becomes evident that nearly half of the working drama translators choose to erase or replace from their work any information contained in the original source text that is likely to baffle the audience during the performance. Similar suggestions can also be found in the theoretical writings of several

translation scholars as well. Franz H. Link, for example, maintains in his article “Translation, Adaptation and Interpretation of Dramatic Texts” that “allusions to current events and references to information which only a very limited audience would possess ... can easily be eliminated from the text for the production” (32). There is, however, another side to the translators’ strategies that needs to be noticed: in their attempt to protect the spectators from being exposed to bewildering facts and/or figures, drama translators inevitably also deprive the performers and their director of this information. To illustrate this, let us consider an example Phyllis Zatlin puts forward in her account (71) placing a line from Arthur Miller’s play *Death of a Salesman* next to its Spanish translation created by José López Rubio:

Willy Loman: The whole wealth of Alaska passes over the lunch table at the Commodore Hotel, and that’s the wonder, the wonder of this country, that a man can end with diamonds here on the basis of being liked!

Willy Loman: Toda la riqueza de Alaska puede venir a sus pies. Eso es lo maravilloso de este país, el que un hombre pueda llegar a donde quiera...

The fact that, as Zatlin rightfully notices, Willy Loman’s “passing reference to a particular New York hotel and the American business lunch disappears completely from López Rubio’s version” means that it is not only the members of the audience but also the actors who will not come to find out about the character’s image of the Alaskan high society socialising and conducting its business over lunch at a luxurious hotel (ibid. 71). Moreover, considering that López Rubio’s version “continues to be the classic translation in Spain of Arthur Miller’s great tragedy”, as Zatlin argues it does (ibid. 71), one could suggest that it will probably be more than half of the Spanish audience and performers who will not discover Miller’s references.

The potential confinement of the actors’ knowledge about the play and its

characters within the translators' expectations of the audience's ability to decode the dramatic work's references can arguably be confirmed both by the translators' determination not to *discuss the issue* of such references *with the actors and the director* as well as by their reluctance to include any footnotes in the translated text. Both these decisions could be interpreted as signs of the strong responsibility translators feel towards the recipients of their work, be it the members of the company or of the audience, to provide them with a target language version of the playwright's work that will not perplex them in any way just as the original source text did not confuse its recipients; yet one cannot ignore the fact that each of them unavoidably affects the actors' work.

Considering, for example, the translators' firm resolve not to inform the members of the company about the *laws, customs, traditions, individuals, places, events etc* referred to in the original dramatic work at hand, one could suggest that it denies the actors the opportunity to keep those among the references that could be useful, or even necessary, not only for the needs of the performance but also for their own imaginative work. To illustrate how critical even a seemingly insignificant detail about a particular item of the character's clothes can be for the creative work of a performer, Stanislavsky provides us in his autobiography with the following example. Analysing Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* with its creator, Stanislavsky and the members of his company reached the following conclusion regarding the main character:

"It is accepted that Uncle Vanya is a member of the landed gentry who manages the estate of the old Professor Serebriakov. It would seem that we had not far to look. The costume and the general appearance of a landed gentleman are known to all, high boots, a cap, sometimes a horsewhip, for it is taken for granted that he rides horseback a great deal. It was so that we painted him to ourselves. But Chekhov was terribly indignant. ... We looked into the original, but we found no hint there unless we were to reckon several words about a silk tie, which Uncle Vanya wore. ... Chekhov tried to persuade us ... 'Listen, he has a wonderful tie; he is an elegant, cultured man. It is not true that our landed gentry walk around in boots smeared with tar. They are wonderful people. They dress well. They order their clothes from Paris.' ... This little remark uncovered the drama of contemporary

Russian life From that time on, Uncle Vanya became for us a cultured, soft, elegant, poetic, fine type of man, almost like the unforgettable and enchanting Petr Ilyich Tschaikovsky” (*My Life in Art* 361-362).

Setting aside whether or not the case of the character’s *silk tie* falls under the category of culture specific references that need explication, what needs to be noticed is how important Chekhov’s reference was for the creative work of Stanislavsky and his actors: the playwright’s remark about the material of the tie Uncle Vanya wears was enough for Stanislavsky’s company to make a leap in its collective imagination and relate the personality of the fictional dramatic character to that of a real-life, romantic composer. With that in mind one could consequently argue that by erasing from his translation Miller’s reference to the *wealth of Alaska passing over the lunch table at the Commodore Hotel*, López Rubio respectively deprived the Spanish actors of a particularly vivid depiction of a part of the American Dream the character of Willy Loman aspired to experience. Furthermore, considering the fast pace at which modern production are put together, one could argue that there seems to be a strong possibility for the actors not to have the opportunity to learn more, for example, about Apollo or Amphytrion during the play’s rehearsals. In his account Steve Gooch puts forward a similar suggestion maintaining that “actors can’t act what they can’t perceive, and if a translation doesn’t communicate directly, directors rarely have enough time to provide compensating explication” (14).

By not seeking to inform and educate the actors with regard to the play’s references, regardless of whether by means of footnotes, marginalia or any other form of explanatory notes accompanying the script, translators appear to undermine also their own work in two different ways. The first one is that they miss an opportunity to fulfil the role assigned to them by Pavis and act, even if only *in absentia*, as dramaturges for the members of the company (“Problems of Translation for the Stage” 27). Drawing on her personal experience

as a professional drama translator Phyllis Zatlin puts forward in her account an example of how crucial and influential a translator's extra-textual contribution can be in the performers' perception of a dramatic work. In 1996 the Ubu Repertory Theater decided to use her translation of the Cuban playwright Eduardo Manet's work *Lady Strass*, which had been published four years earlier, and the director of the performance, André Ernotte, sent Zatlin an invitation to attend the rehearsals in New York. While listening to the cast's analysis of the play, Zatlin was amazed to find out that their reading coincided completely with her own. When she expressed her surprise at this coincidence she was told that "the theatre's artistic director ... had given [to the actors] copies of [her] detailed scene-by-scene notes on the play's action" which she had prepared "at the request of a potential director" (5) several years ago and which she had forgotten having sent to Ubu Repertory Theatre once the particular project had fallen through.

The second way in which the translators' work is affected by their own decision not to let the actors know about the play's references is that they lose a crucial partner in finding ways to transfer to the audience any culture-specific information that is to be found in the original creation by means other than through the translated text itself. According to Egil Törnqvist, the performers are not only entitled but also expected to contribute to the transmission of such information to the members of the audience. As the scholar points out, the spectator will not "be helped out of his ignorance" with regard to the culture specific references of the play, "unless the translator or, preferably, the director somehow manages to incorporate the needed information in the performance" (12). Although Törnqvist does not elaborate on who is to decide which of the pieces of information contained in the playwright's work are to be considered as *necessary* and which one are not, his *preference* for *the director* being the one to *incorporate* any such information *in the performance* may serve as an indication that at least the head of the company is required to be actively

involved both in their selection as well as in their processing.

The performers' participation in the shaping of the translated text appears to be also the key to enabling translators to function within the framework of the Stanislavskian model described earlier: the more actors are to take part in the decision-making process regarding issues that concern the transmission of the information contained in the source creation as well as the text's aural presentation, the more translators will need to shift their attention away from the auditorium and onto the stage in order to address the performers' needs not as recipients but as co-creators of the target language version of the playwright's work. This would mean, for example, that in the case of the real-life events that inspired Lope to write *The Gentleman From Olmedo* translators following Stanislavsky's model would need to find a way to let the actors know about the background story of the playwright's work instead of or, at least, prior to pondering on how to "provide this information to the audience from the outset" (Johnston, *Stages of Translation* 59). The same can be thought to hold also for the cases of *Apollo* and *Amphitryon* about whom translators will need to inform the actors regardless of whether or not the audience will also receive the same information. What needs to be noticed, however, is that by modifying their work's objective and aiming not at delivering but at presenting, not at handing over but at exhibiting the translated text to the members of the company, translators are likely to also have to use all of the traditional tools by which they conventionally communicate information to their readers, such as footnotes, introductions etc. What could arguably necessitate the use of such devices is the mere possibility of the translators not being able or even permitted to attend the rehearsals of the play, in which case they will need to resort to indirect ways of transferring the necessary information to the members of the company. Returning to the original question on whether it is possible for translators to transfer a dramatic text from one language into another without having the members of the audience

in mind, one could consequently argue that such a goal is not completely out of the translators' reach provided that they *harmonise* the relationship they share with the performers and allow them to contribute to the transfer of the playwright's creation from its source to the target environment.

Summarising our discussion on Stanislavsky's notion of *infectiousness*, one could argue that it is this final pillar of Stanislavsky's *theatre of experiencing* that appears to genuinely be putting to the test the feasibility of the translators' participation in the construction of the dramatic spectacle as Stanislavskian actors. As far as the System's actors are concerned, the notion of *infectiousness* constitutes the natural extension of the dividing line originally set by the notion of *artistic expression*, which separates the stage from the auditorium and the actors from the spectators. The performers' duty is to remain concentrated on their side of the footlights and allow their performance to *infect* the spectators. Transferred to the case of drama translators, however, this line seems to demarcate the boundaries between two different roles: that of the playwright and that of the actor. Acting as playwrights, translators are not required to provide the actors with additional explanations that could assist them in understanding the play, its references or its characters. As Franz H. Link points out, it is the text that "is supposed to supply all the information necessary to understand the action and its motivation" (31). Acting as Stanislavskian actors or, perhaps better put, as Stanislavskian artists, on the other hand, translators cannot afford to function as passive "independent agents" towards the other members of the company (Stanislavski, "An Argument" 180). They need to ally themselves with the performers, to consciously and actively seek to assist them in acquiring an insight into the playwright's creation similar to their own and in turn allow themselves to be influenced by the performers' interpretation of the play and be guided by their needs. Insofar as drama translators are able to maintain such a dialectical relationship with the

performers, their passage from *the attic* to the stage will occur smoothly. If not, then they would inevitably be considered, from a Stanislavskian perspective, “a roomer who wants to run the boarding house” (ibid. 181).

Conclusions

The present study has highlighted both some important similarities and some crucial differences between the creative processes that Stanislavsky's actors and many drama translators follow. Reflecting on Stanislavsky's System, one could argue that its main service to actors appears to consist in offering them two distinct tools for their work in the theatre, that is a way to approach the fictional and a way to approach the performable. In terms of their usefulness and applicability to the work of the drama translator, the tools that Stanislavsky seeks to give his actors also appear to be equally divided into two groups: one group that may be seen as relevant, or at least adaptable, to the needs of drama translators and a second that may be regarded as not valid or relevant to their practice.

Stanislavsky's understanding of the process of reading as part of the actors' creative process that needs to take place driven firstly by an impact-oriented logic rather than by a project-oriented one, for example, is something that I believe deserves the translators' attention. Reading the playtext in accordance with Stanislavsky's reasoning can help translators disassociate the process of reading from the process of writing and thereby enable them to approach the playwright's creation on a level other than the purely intellectual. In a similar manner, Stanislavsky's proposed use of extra-textual, real-life material during the preparatory study stage of work on a play is potentially of considerable importance to the work of drama translators; it may help them (a) acquire a better understanding of the fictional world and (b) decode not only the rationale but also the motives and constraints behind the dramatic characters' verbal and physical actions.

Stanislavsky's notion of *existing among the play's circumstances*, on the other hand, and the emphasis he places on mapping out the spatiotemporally hidden past and future actions of all of a play's characters, even if these do not interfere in any way with the

development of the plot, do not appear to be directly relevant to a drama translator's work. Although one can easily understand Stanislavsky's motives behind these two suggestions – to prevent his actors not only from focusing solely on their own role, and also to encourage them to use the powerful impressions the playwright's imaginary setting can provide them with – translators in their dual capacity as both *aesthetic* and *efferent* readers can transfer themselves into the fictional world while simultaneously being fully aware of the characters' movements and actions in it.

In a similar manner, although the value Stanislavsky places on the actors' emotional exploration of the playwright's work reminds translators that their own "personal experiences – emotions, motivations, attitudes, associations – are not only allowable in the formation of a working TL text [but] indispensable" (Robinson, *The Translator's Turn* 260), his proposed *emotional identification* with a single dramatic character does not seem to provide translators with the appropriate tool to address the responsibilities of the multiple roles they are required to simultaneously play when working for the stage.

Equally problematic from a translator's perspective is also the level of self-observation and self-awareness that Stanislavsky demands from his actors with regard to their bodies, i.e. their medium of expression, as it is extremely difficult to achieve in the case of language, which is the translators' medium of expression. On the other hand, Stanislavsky's attempt to concentrate his actors' attention on the playtext's punctuation and pauses – as well as his classification of the latter into *breathing*, *logical* and *psychological* pauses – can alert translators not only to the importance that actors place on intonation and non-verbal communication but also to the need to understand the relationship between the external and internal rhythm of the playwright's creation.

Stanislavsky's determination to protect, at all costs, the nature of the collective effort in the theatre is also of crucial importance to translators as it calls upon them to claim

their own position in the rehearsal room as creative artists in their own right and to fight against their perception as voyeurs or onlookers disrupting the “love affair between [the director] and the performers” (Espasa 61). The strict code of artistic ethics that he maintains should govern his envisioned *theatre of experiencing*, on the other hand, appears to be incompatible with the translator’s function in the real theatre as the *target language representative of the playwright* and the creative rights that emanate from it.

Based on this evaluation, Stanislavsky’s System would appear to be more useful to the budding drama translator, who is not yet fully aware of the complexities and realities of working for the stage, rather than to the more experienced one, to whom it will presumably sound more as a collection of helpful reminders of things already known rather than of suggestions that could radically influence his or her way of working. As true as this may be for the inexperienced translator, however, who will probably appreciate Stanislavsky’s work even if only as a vivid and systematic account of one of most influential approaches to acting worldwide, the view that experienced drama translators will find limited usefulness in Stanislavsky’s teachings does not seem to hold up. What appears to be problematic about such a suggestion is that it does not seem to take into consideration the fact that like the knowledge of theatre practitioners, the knowledge of theatre translation practitioners is arguably also a *pragmatic system* that relies on *effective practice*. As was pointed out in the introductory chapter on drama translation and was demonstrated throughout this thesis, translators employ a variety of creative strategies and use a variety of tools to address the difficulties they encounter during the course of their work. What these choices, highly individualised as they may be, have in common, however, is that they are almost exclusively made based on their proven or assumed effectiveness. This is what leads to their adoption, revision and rejection not only between translation tasks but also during the course of rendering a single work into another language. This is also what makes

it difficult to predict with certainty which aspect(s) of Stanislavsky's System would actually appeal to any given translator, experienced or not, as a possibly effective way of dealing with any given problem of his or her work for the stage. It seems, therefore, that in order to evaluate whether and how drama translation practice could benefit from utilising the way Stanislavskian actors work, and thereby also assess the validity of thinking of the drama translator specifically as a Stanislavskian actor, we will need to attempt looking beyond the subjectivities of individual practice.

Reflecting on translators and the act of translation, David Johnston argues that "at the heart ... of every act or event that is generated by a translator, there is a double consciousness [that goes beyond] the dyadic unity of translation as theory and practice" (12-13). This doubleness, maintains Johnston, is evident not only in the way translators approach the text trying to explain "the other to the self while, at the same time, protecting the other from assimilation by the self" (ibid. 12), but also in their relation to the text within which they operate as actors being "both visible and invisible – simultaneously subsumed into the text (actor as character, translator as reader) and ... active agent[s] of its recreation (actor as performer, translator as theatre-writer)" (ibid. 17). The self/other and visible/invisible binaries that Johnston brings forward in his account offer us a lens through which we can view not only drama translation but also Stanislavsky's own work. For the challenging questions these dualities pose troubled Stanislavsky both as an actor and a director: is it the *self* that actors need to protect or the *other* that they need to aim at projecting? Should their *visibility* take precedence over *invisibility*? Or is it perhaps that the conflicting notions of *self* and *other*, of *visible* and *invisible* can somehow be reconciled? His answer, as it can arguably be deduced from his life's work, is that it is through the *self* that the *other* needs to be approached and it is through one's *visibility* than one can become *invisible*. By the notion of *self*, however, Stanislavsky does not seem to refer only to the

notion of the *common self* but also to that of the *individual self*. The work of Stanislavskian actors consists not only in identifying the uniqueness of each dramatic character but also in using their own physical and psychological uniqueness – that is the elements that comprise their *visibility* – to approach it by looking beyond its stereotypical perception, i.e. the perception of the *common self*. The tighter the psychophysical bond they will be able to establish with the dramatic characters, the more believable and less *visible* they will become when portraying them on the stage.

This notion of artistic, or rather of creative, self-reliance serves as one of the central parts of the Stanislavskian approach to acting. What is particularly interesting, however, is that the same notion appears to be present, to a lesser or greater degree, in nearly all of the translators' accounts brought forward in this thesis, regardless of whether these were related to the translation of dramatic texts or not: in Ted Hughes's suggestion of using one's *own* sensibility when working on a translation; in Gershon Shaked's point that translating involves transferring the *other* into one's *own* world of experiences; in Noel Clark's argument that translating implies a *personal* response to the author's text; in Bill Findlay's use of his *own* Scots when working on Cousse's *Enfantillages*; in Phyllis Zatlin's decision to use her *own* voice, as well as that of her *own* mother and daughter, when confronted with the three female characters in Bouchaud's *Is That How It Was?*; in Ranjit Bolt's reliance on his *own* sense of humour when translating Corneille and Molière's plays, etc. What this points to is that translators appear to share with Stanislavskian actors the practice of using themselves, that is their "own sensations, [their] own real emotions, [their] personal life experience" (Stanislavski, *Creating a Role* 25), as a primary tool for approaching the text they are requested to recreate. It is in this respect that translators would appear to benefit most from Stanislavsky's System – not only as a means of gaining access into the way a particular type of actor processes a playwright's work, but also as an

approach to creative self-reliance that could provide them with ideas not only on how to deepen and broaden their own personal filter, through which they receive and transmit the original creation, but also on how to create conditions favourable to their reception of the text's stimuli. It could help them, for example, develop processes similar to the *switching off* technique that Jacob Kenda argues that he discovered using his experience as actor; or provide them with ways of dealing with challenges such as the one Nicholas de Lange experienced when confronted with the difficulty of *getting inside* a particular character of different gender, from a different time and place.

Making the case for the usefulness of an awareness of the Stanislavskian theatre practice should not be perceived, of course, as a suggestion that drama translators should submit themselves to an actor's training. Although there is no doubt that having *some practical experience of the theatre* is of immense value when translating for the stage, it would be unrealistic to expect from a translator to go through a complete actor's training course prior to getting involved in a drama translation project. This is not to say, however, that learning about and mediating on the creative process of Stanislavskian actors does not merit a place in translator training, particularly in the training of the drama translator. Stanislavsky's body of work can offer translators not only an invaluable insight into the world of actors and a unique and methodical way of looking at a playtext's *x-ray* but also a variety of tools that could help them in dealing with the creative challenges of re-creation. That being said, one should also note that Stanislavsky's System is not the only *system* that can do that. Neither the similarities nor the differences we have found between the drama translators' creative process and that of the particular type of actors explored in this thesis should blind us to the fact that there is a multitude of approaches to the actor's art that may be of both practical and theoretical use to the translator. The questions raised in this thesis concerning the role and needs of the translator in the theatre are clearly too complex to be

answered in full by a single approach to acting; a cross-fertilization of approaches to the actor's work might thus be more useful as well as operational. Instances of such possible points of connection have already been pointed out. Bertolt Brecht's concept of *alienation*, for example, seems to lie extraordinarily close to Lawrence Venuti's notion of *foreignisation*. In a similar manner, Vsevolod Meyerhold's *biomechanics* could enhance the discussion on the understanding of language as the translators' *body* through which they are called to express the author's work. The concrete or systematic shaping of such a cross-fertilisation, however, goes beyond the scope of the present study and requires both further theoretical discussion and – crucially – practical experimentation. In this light, this is perhaps the most important point established by our enquiry. Paraphrasing Schleiermacher, we need to take a more decisive step towards *bringing the translator closer to the theatre and the theatre closer to the translator*.

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